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ASSESSING THE STATE OF OUR NATION'S BIODEFENSE

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS UNITED STATES SENATE ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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ASSESSING THE STATE OF OUR NATION'S BIODEFENSE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2015

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:33 p.m., in room SD-342, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Ron Johnson, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Johnson, Ayotte, Ernst, Carper, McCaskill, Heitkamp, Booker, and Peters.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN JOHNSON

Chairman JOHNSON. This hearing will come to order. I think I can speak for everybody on the Committee here. It is just a real pleasure to welcome back Senator Lieberman, the former Chairman of this Committee, and former Secretary Tom Ridge, two patriots, two great Americans who continue to serve their country, particularly now on this particular subject, something that really should concern all of us: potential biological warfare, naturally occurring pathogens, those types of things, and what we need to do to defend our Nation against these threats.

Senator Lieberman, I am not sure whether I mentioned this last time you were here, but working with our esteemed Ranking Member Senator Carper, when I took over the chairmanship, I did something that you normally do in business. You start out, first of all, on an area of agreement. But we developed a mission Statement for the Committee, and it is pretty simple: To enhance the economic and national security of America. It is something we all agreed on. It kind of helps direct the activities of the Committee. And let us face it, if we are facing a biological threat, that would threaten both our national security and our economic security. And I truly appreciate the time you have put into this commission, this effort, to the report that I believe you released this morning and you are testifying about today, because this is a very serious issue. And rather than listen to me yammer on, I am going to ask that my opening statement be entered for the record.¹ I just really want to spend more time listening to what you have found and what your recommendations really are.

With that, I will turn it over to Senator Carper.

¹The prepared statement of Senator Johnson appears in the Appendix on page 31.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARPER

Senator CARPER. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

I was telling the Chairman, as you all walked in to take your seats, that sitting down before us are two of my all-time favorite people. Tom Ridge and I were elected to the House of Representatives—we are both Vietnam veterans. We were elected to the House in 1982, same freshman class, and served together there for—I was there for 10 years, he was there for 12—and then went on to become Governors. When Joe Lieberman was running for President, he was good enough to let me be his general campaign manager for President in the Delaware primary, and it was this high watermark. And he finished second there, seven votes ahead of John Edwards. Hotly contested.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Seven historic votes. [Laughter.]

Senator CARPER. Yes, they were. And when Tom Ridge was running for Governor, I told everybody from Pennsylvania that I met in Delaware, I said, “Do you know Tom Ridge is running for Governor up there?” And they said, “Yes, I have heard that name.” And I told everybody what a great guy you were. And you turned out to be a great Governor.

Joe was good enough to encourage me as a freshman Senator, when I was considering Committee assignments, to consider this one, and he said, “Who knows? You might even end up as the Chairman someday.” And sure enough, I do not think as good as the ones who preceded me, but it was a joy serving with both of you in those capacities, and it is great to have you before us today. We thank you really for your extraordinary service in years gone by and your continued service, as the Chairman says, to our country.

In recent years, public officials and academic experts alike have sounded the alarm about our ability to deal effectively with biological threats. We think about it a lot in Delaware. As Senator Lieberman knows, we think a lot about avian influenza, and he knows all about chickens in Delaware. But since 2000, several commissions, including the 9/11 Commission, have affirmed the danger that the release of a biological agent can pose to all of us. In doing so, they have urged us to devote more attention and resources to detecting, preventing, and responding to such an incident.

Our experience with Ebola over the last year in East Africa serves as a fresh reminder that biological threats are real. Over 11,000 people worldwide lost their lives in that Ebola outbreak, and a number of Americans were infected with that disease. The spread of this disease, as well as the public alarm over that epidemic, demonstrate the importance of having the appropriate policies, public engagement plans, and resources in place ahead of time.

It is important to remember, too, that biological threats do not just have an adverse effect on our health and our homeland security. As the Chairman has said, they can also dramatically impact and adversely impact our economy. As some of us will recall, just a couple of months ago, parts of our country, including parts that we are privileged to represent, struggled with an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian flu from wild birds going on the flyways and leaving behind their droppings and creating great havoc, great loss.

Though harmless to people so far, the virus devastated some parts of the poultry industry, not just chickens, broilers, but turkey, egg-laying hens, and the impact on businesses that we heard about right here in testimony that was offered in some cases very great.

Further complicating matters, there have also been a number of troubling incidents over the past year at Federal and nongovernmental labs where research of infectious diseases is done.

The reports of deadly pathogens being mishandled or misplaced is concerning to all of us and underscores the need for more rigorous oversight both here and in the administration.

And in the midst of these developments, a number of very smart people came together and began examining how the Federal Government, our Federal Government, in conjunction with State, local, and nongovernmental entities, was doing at preventing and combating potential biological hazards.

Since last year, the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense—led by our two very able friends here—has convened a number of public meetings, and consulted with a whole lot of experts. And their goal was simple, actually: offer recommendations on how to improve our efforts and address capability gaps that had previously been overlooked.

That review, released earlier this morning, I believe, contains a number of valuable recommendations that could significantly improve our biosecurity efforts. We sure hope so. And I urge our administration and I urge all of us in the Congress to give these recommendations the attention they deserve and then take action.

I remember when you were our Chairman, you and Susan were leading this Committee, we had the 9/11 Commission come before us. They had all their recommendations, which I think they adopted unanimously, and shared them with us, and my recollection is we ended up approving, I do not know, 80, 90 percent of all of them, and also unanimously. But the idea was not just to sit on them but do something with them.

I look forward to discussing the Panel's findings today. I am confident that our witnesses can help Congress identify any number of common-sense improvements to our Nation's biodefense systems that could be enacted with bipartisan support.

Again, our thanks to Senator Lieberman and thanks to Governor Ridge for being here today to discuss their work and that of the team they led. I look forward to a productive hearing and knowing that the two of you are going to enjoy this as well as we will. And to paraphrase one of our former commanders-in-chief, "Bring it on!"

Chairman JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Carper.

Well, as Senator Lieberman well knows, it is the tradition of this Committee to swear in witnesses, so if you will both rise and raise your right hand. Do you swear that the testimony you will give before this Committee will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you, God?

Senator LIEBERMAN. I do.

Governor Ridge. I do.

Chairman JOHNSON. Please be seated.

TESTIMONY OF THE HONORABLE JOSEPH I. LIEBERMAN,¹ CO-CHAIR, BLUE RIBBON STUDY PANEL ON BIODEFENSE

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks very much, Mr. Chairman and Senator Carper. It is really great to be back here. Thank you for your warm personal and supportive introductions. And it is great to see other Members of the Committee. I spent a lot of years in this room, and I look back with a real sense of appreciation that I had the opportunity to do so. This was really a center of bipartisan activity when it was not happening in a lot of other places. I am just impressed and appreciative that you have continued the tradition of mixed seating here. It was a small step for mankind but a large step for Congress. [Laughter.]

I probably have used that before, but, anyway, this Committee has a history of obviously, leadership on homeland security but also interest in the biological threat and in improving our biodefense. And for that reason, and, of course, my own personal history here, I am really grateful that this Senate Committee is the first to hold a hearing on our report, and I appreciate the interest very much. And, frankly, I hope as this goes on that the Committee will decide to be champions and advocates for some of the things we recommend as you determine your support.

This commission came together, our Panel came together about a year ago. It was a small group of people, but greatly supported by the two ladies behind us, Dr. Asha George and Dr. Ellen Carlin, who led our staff. The committee was composed of Secretary Ridge and me, although I know he likes to be called "Governor Ridge," prefers that, as all former Governors—

Senator CARPER. My staff had written it down "Secretary" and I crossed that out.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I understand. You are forgiven. So great to work with Tom Ridge. You could not ask for a more constructive, more well-intentioned person to work with.

The Panel was really bipartisan: Former Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Donna Shalala, former Congressman Jim Greenwood; former Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, of course, who was himself a target in the anthrax attacks in 2001; and former Homeland Security Advisor during the Bush Administration, Ken Wainstein.

I am going to just talk for a bit and keep an eye on the clock so I do not go too long, first to say the title of the hearing is "Assessing the State of Our Nation's Biodefense," and I would say that the bottom-line conclusion of this report is that we are better defended than we were in 2001 after the anthrax attacks, but really the State of our biodefense is inadequate, and we are unprepared for the very real biological threats we face, both from terrorists and from naturally emerging contagious diseases.

The reality is that we are spending about \$6 billion a year on biodefense, and, interestingly, that is not a number that you can find easily in the Federal budget. We had to go to a group at the University of Pittsburgh who did some analysis on it because there is no unified budget for biodefense. And we concluded that we are not getting our money's worth, and this particular area of home-

¹The joint prepared statement of Senator Lieberman appears in the Appendix on page 35.

land security really needs another look, a review, which we started and obviously we hope Congress will continue.

Is the threat real from infectious disease, an intentional bioterror attack? We would say clearly yes. Naturally occurring biothreats such as Ebola or avian flu, as was described, are bypassing borders to emerge on our shores, and they will continue to do so.

Terrorist groups like the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) are devastating the Middle East, setting new horrific standards for inhumanity and brutality, and have specifically endorsed—
ISIL has specifically endorsed—the use of biological weapons and threatened to use them against the American homeland. So this is a real threat.

Are we ready for it? I will go back to the two things that I mentioned briefly. Let us talk about Ebola. The response to Ebola, in my opinion and most people's, was unacceptable. Ebola had been deemed a material threat, designated so by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), for nearly a decade before last year's outbreak, which killed I think more than 6,000 people in Africa. But we did not have a single rapid diagnostic vaccine or treatment available.

The response to Ebola, as you will remember, by our government was uncoordinated, to put it mildly, and I found at least with people I was talking to that a panic was emerging. The public was terrified about Ebola coming here. Even with 10 months of warning, while the Ebola virus spread overseas, Federal agencies did not actually provide hospitals in the United States with the basic guidance they would need to manage an Ebola case.

It is quite possible—we do not know—that the next outbreak of Ebola or something like it will not give us 10 months' warning, and the danger is, of course, it will be much more communicable.

The second is avian flu. Senator Carper talked about it, so I will just touch on it briefly. But the reality is that almost 50 million birds, poultry, were euthanized, culled, as a result of the avian flu outbreak. And we were lucky that it did not cross over to the human population. We have no guarantee that it might not the next time we are hit with avian flu. But as you said, and it is important to note, the economic consequences of that outbreak were severe. I saw one estimate that said we actually spent almost \$1 billion of taxpayer money to respond to it, but also the direct impact on the poultry industry, and even on consumer prices, of course, as a result of what happened.

The experts that we heard from on our Panel said that they would expect—not all of them, but some that came to us—said that they would expect as early as the coming year, wild migratory birds will bring back another wave of avian flu. Nobody can say for sure whether that will be the same variety. The Department of Agriculture (USDA) has a vaccine that they are weighing putting out, but we do not know whether the next version of avian flu might not only mutate but actually cross over to the human population with those consequences.

And so we are not ready, and our aim was to try to make recommendations to suggest how we could be more ready. This report—and I give the staff a lot of credit for this—is really substantive. In other words, I distinguish it. It is not wonkish. It is

quite practical. It is very detailed. And I think all of us learned a lot in this process. There are 33 categories of recommendations. There are about 100 action items, and I think each of them deserves to be considered. I will just give you one example, and then I will make a final point.

One of the things that I learned in my work on this Committee which I had not really appreciated enough was the interconnection between human and animal pathogens, and of the number of the various biological threats listed by the Department of Homeland Security, there is only one, as I recall, smallpox, that does not begin in an animal population. The same is true of infectious diseases. And yet we separate these two. We do not think about them together as one. And to me and I think members of the Panel, one of the most stunning oversights or omissions here is that there is no national registry or list of contemporary presence or outbreak of animal diseases so that they can be tracked. There is a list by which we aim to track human diseases to see if there is an infectious disease pandemic taking place, but as I said, these more often than not start with animal diseases.

So one of our recommendations—it happens to be number 7—is to create such a list and implement a system by which it can be conveyed on a real-time basis to relevant public and private authorities.

The final point I wanted to make is that the first recommendation may be critical to any hope to see anything happen on all the other recommendations because in this area, as in so many areas of government, nobody is driving this bus. Nobody is leading the effort, coordinating the effort. And as a result, there is a tremendous amount of overlap. As I say, we do not even actually know in the Federal Government how much we are spending every year on biodefense. We need a coordinator, a leader.

We started to think about who should do this. I mean, there is an Assistant Secretary at HHS that has wide-ranging responsibilities. Should we put that person in charge? But as we went on to make a long story short, we thought what if you take one department person and put them in charge of everybody else, including departments that are equal, at least in size, that it is probably not going to work. And then we thought, well, maybe we will create a new Assistant National Security Adviser or, God forbid, another czar, and everybody said no, that will not do it. And we ended up where we did not start, which is to recommend, surprisingly, that we should give this responsibility to the Vice President of the United States because that office has such stature and make sure that—and this would have to be done by the President—the Vice President have authority to create a Biodefense Council, a Biodefense Strategy, and be in charge of a unified biodefense budget.

So the reason I come back and say that may be the primary recommendation, it is not in that sense the most important—there are a lot of detailed recommendations—because we fear that if there is not somebody driving the bus, even if some of the other recommendations are adopted, their implementation is going to be haphazard and our biosecurity will suffer.

I will end with what I said at the beginning. I hope that some of you on the Committee and the Committee itself will think about

taking whatever parts of this report seem sensible and necessary to you and become leaders in the Senate and Congress and seeing it through to implementation.

Thanks very much for having us here.

Chairman JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Lieberman. By the way, if you check the record, I was actually going to introduce you, but I guess we did it anyway.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Oh, I am sorry. OK.

Chairman JOHNSON. Not a problem.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Once I was sworn in, I was ready to go.

Chairman JOHNSON. By the way, the other tradition I think that we have in addition to kind of mixing up here on the panel is I really do think we have maintained the tradition that certainly I saw as you being a Chairman of really trying to find those areas of agreement, try and concentrate on those things that unify us rather than exploit the differences. And, again, I think you and Susan Collins did a great job setting that example, as did Chairman Carper and Ranking Member Tom Coburn. So we have tried to maintain that as much as possible.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I know you have, and I thank you for that, Senator.

Chairman JOHNSON. Our next witness is Governor Tom Ridge, who also served as Co-Chair of the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense. He is currently CEO of Ridge Global, an international security risk management advisory firm, among other private sector roles. Before 9/11, he served as the Governor of Pennsylvania for 6 years. After 9/11, he was appointed the First Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and in 2003 the first Secretary of Homeland Security. Governor Ridge.

TESTIMONY OF THE HONORABLE THOMAS J. RIDGE,¹ CO-CHAIR, BLUE RIBBON STUDY PANEL ON BIODEFENSE

Governor RIDGE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Carper, ladies and gentlemen. First of all, I want to thank you for the invitation to participate in today's hearing. I was thinking about those kind comments you made about Senator Lieberman and Senator Collins, and I would just put an exclamation point behind them, because I had many appearances on the Hill through multiple committees, given the fact there are 108 committees and subcommittees that the Secretary of Homeland Security has to report to. And I must tell you that the bipartisan nature of this Committee and the very constructive way that both R's and D's looked to provide challenges, of course, but counsel to the Department it is embedded in my mind as the way government and politics ought to intersect, so I want to thank you for maintaining that. And it is great to be with Senator Lieberman. I have great admiration for his record of service, and when we talk with our colleagues and you take a look at the four men and women who constituted this Panel and take a look at the ex officio members and then take a look at the capable staff directed by the two extraordinary professionals seated behind us, we said we did not need one more report, because since 2001 there have been four different studies and commissions that

¹The joint prepared statement of Governor Ridge appears in the Appendix on page 35.

have dealt, in part or in whole, with weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and bioweapons and problems. And yet in spite of these well-intentioned efforts and some thoughtfulness approaching this issue, not much has changed during the past 14 years. And we all agreed that we are not only going to complete a report, but we are going to make some very specific recommendations and then go beyond recommendations, even include action items to implement those recommendations. So I am not going to spend a great deal of time reviewing them. I do encourage everyone, however, it is about as thoughtful, as probative, and as important a report on the nature of the biothreat that I think this Congress has ever seen. And we are looking for champions. We are looking for bipartisan champions. It is a national problem. It requires a solution set that is bipartisan in nature.

By the way, I understand that you passed the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act (CISA) today. Is that right? Senator, did you tell me that? That is something I have been working on for 4 years as well. So from the cyber side, I want to thank you for the bipartisan support. Things get done here, and they are even more effective when they are bipartisan, and that is what we are looking for, bipartisan champions here.

So let me make a few observations and then we will open it up to questions, if you would like.

The recommendations contained in this report go far beyond Homeland Security Presidential Directive No. 10, which is the cornerstone, which is really the foundation around which we built our report, but there is so much more to it than that. Together, our recommendations address the broad spectrum of biodefense activities: prevention, deterrence, preparedness, detection, response, attribution, recovery, and mitigation. It is a wide range of issues that need simultaneous attention. They are not really one-off. One thing you will see in this report is many of the recommendations and the action items are interconnected because it is about building an architecture, a system of oversight and integration not only of Federal capabilities but State and local, academic, private sector, and the like to deal with the threat.

One of the reasons we all joined this Panel was we felt very strongly that this threat has not been given attention. It has not been part of the national conversation with regard to threats to America's national security and to our economic prosperity, and we all know that whether the pathogen is thrown at us by a terrorist or a nation State. By the way, the global community, including Iran, North Korea, Syria, Russia, and China, maintain dual capacities, both offensive and defensive weapons, and as the Senator pointed out, it is pretty clear that terrorists have not only talked about it, but they have access to computers. We better start worrying about them hacking into intellectual property and developing the capabilities to genetically modify some of the stuff that is out there, and then Mother Nature. We know from the Ebola crisis Mother Nature is always lurking around the corner, and what really frustrated many of us was when I—and particularly yours truly. I will speak just for myself. When I became Secretary. When I was the Assistant to the President in the White House within the first

couple weeks, I got a long list of pathogens that everybody was worried about. This is 2001. One of those was Ebola.

Now, one would have thought if somebody in the Federal Government considered Ebola to be a potential problem, then by 2014 or 2015, we would have had an antidote and a vaccine ready for it, because as we all know, pathogens neither know politics nor boundaries. And given the geopolitical nature and given the forces of globalization, what happens over there now happens here.

So it was a part of the scenario, and everybody did the best they could in response to that. But one would have thought, given its identification over a decade previously, we would have been better prepared to deal with it, because it then was a high priority.

So that is what we tried to do. We address in our recommendations programs and policies, and we set them out short term, mid-term, long term. We want to make perfectly clear, at least according to this Panel—and we talked to a lot of experts, had hearings outside of Washington. We want to make it perfectly clear who should execute each item. We like the notion of responsibility and then accountability. We like that. Exactly what they should do, we make very specific recommendations, action items, and the time-frame we think it needs to be done. This is actionable information, and we think it is pretty important that many of these initiatives be undertaken simultaneously rather than one-off.

I would like to share with you a couple thoughts about the central piece of this, and then we will get into the question-and-answer period.

We strongly recommend and strongly believe that the only person in the national government, in the Federal Government that has the capacity and, frankly, the political and financial muscle to move and build an integrated architecture to deal with the bio-threat is the Vice President of the United States. We know there have been czars in the past. Often government responds after the incident. Remember, we are talking about prevention and intelligence and readiness and all those things. So the czar has been there. I will speak from my own experience as Assistant to the President. The office next to the President, I used the Roosevelt Room, but Assistants to the President still cannot move money around. You can make recommendations, but you do not, frankly, have as much clout on the Hill. You know this. I am preaching to the choir. And then all of a sudden you become a Secretary, and then you find out—and this is not a criticism, but there is still a lot of turf in this town, has been, always will be. That is how we operate. I understand that completely. So whether you are a czar or an Assistant to the President, certainly an Assistant Secretary of HHS for Preparedness and Response does not have the cachet, even individual Secretaries. And this challenge, we felt, since it cuts across multiple agencies and is of the highest importance, we think we need to elevate our attention and rebuild that architecture. The President is pretty busy, and the Vice President certainly will have their share of responsibilities. But there was one person we thought could cut through it.

So in addition to the recommendations that we have here, we need to explain to you why we thought the Vice President should be in charge. That is one. It is cross-cutting. I believe Secretaries

will pay attention to the Vice President because that office, that individual is speaking for the President.

We also think that that is the place—and we are going to ask Congress in the future to appropriate money for the Biodefense Co-ordination Council that will be in the Vice President's Office, and this is going to be an integrated set of capable people, government and nongovernment, public, private, and academic research institutions. We do not have a national strategy, ladies and gentlemen. This is a real threat. We cannot get ahead of this threat because it already exists. So let us accept the reality it exists. And we have to do everything we can to reduce our risk of not only exposure but also to be a lot better prepared because we know we cannot develop a fail-safe system in order to immunize ourselves permanently. So we have to do that.

So we need a national strategy. Who better to oversee that than the Vice President with the right group of people around him?

We need a unified budget. I can speak, as I tried to do as the Secretary—I know I wanted what the Department needed, and everybody else. And we had some cross-cutting jurisdictions, and another Secretary wanted to do what he or she wanted. But at the end of the day, we need somebody in the White House working with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to make sure that the unified budget reflects not the Cabinet department or the agency or the institution's preferences, but what is in the best interest in supporting an overall biodefense architecture and plan. So you need the strategy. You need the unified budget. And then obviously we give you recommendations with regard to how we think the action items, frankly, would follow on these recommendations in order to build out that architecture.

And why do we do all that? Because if you take a look in the back of this, there are 25 pieces of legislation, Executive Orders (EO)—25 pieces of legislation or Executive Orders or treaties that deal with biodefense. You probably cannot name them all. We could not either, thank you, but our staff pointed them out. There are 50 political appointees in the Federal Government all having some responsibility of biodefense.

Look at Appendix A, and this is something near and dear to my heart. There are four pages of congressional committees and sub-committees that have disparate jurisdictions over bits and pieces. So we are basically saying that, in addition to the really substantive recommendations we made, there are three of them—the first two will drive what we think will create a sense of urgency. We do not want to be reckless about it. A lot of these things are going to take account years to embed into our architecture. But it is serious enough, the Vice President ought to oversee it. The Cabinet Secretaries pay attention to the Vice President and the President of the United States. And we can move this along to where we do not create a fail-safe system, but we create a far better system than exists today. I think the American public—and I am not going to speak for the American public, but I just know in my conversations with a lot of people, Ebola concerned a few. Then you explain to them how responsibility—there is nobody responsible ultimately. There is no ultimate accountability in the system for biodefense. And so we give that responsibility and accountability to

the Vice President, and we are quite confident that that individual with bipartisan support in the House and the Senate can get these things done.

So we are grateful for the opportunity to share these thoughts with you, and hopefully we have convinced you enough in this Committee that has broad jurisdiction that we will find a couple champions in here to help us with these short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations and see that they become part of the bio-defense architecture we have in this country. And we thank you very much.

Chairman JOHNSON. Thank you, Governor.

It seems you are both recommending the Vice President. It just begs the question. Have either of you or have both of you spoken with Vice President Biden, by any chance, to just get his thoughts and input in terms of having a Vice President, whether it is him or his successor? Again, did you speak with him?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Not yet. I notified Steve Ricchetti, who is his chief of staff, that the report would make this recommendation, and we sent a copy over yesterday afternoon so they would have some advance notice on it. So I have no idea—

Chairman JOHNSON. So no reaction out of that?

Senator LIEBERMAN. No.

Chairman JOHNSON. Can you just talk about exactly how you think this unified budget would work? Would you recommend taking out the funding from the different agencies, the different departments, unify it in, for example, the budget of the Executive Office, allocate it to the Vice President, and then he would reallocate it back to those different departments and agencies? I mean, how would you see that working?

Senator LIEBERMAN. So I am going to give a legislator's response and then yield to the former Cabinet member. The truth is we did not dig down on that. Your expression of, your implementation of, our idea makes sense. That is one way to do it. I mean, the main point, the main thing is to have somebody who knows really the totality of what is being spent on this important area of biodefense and then can make judgments about what is working and what is not and move money around within the budget, or I suppose if the Vice President thinks so, ask for more money.

But we think that what we are recommending can be done pretty much within the existing dollars, as we see them. Governor.

Governor RIDGE. I think it is a wonderful question. I am particularly interested in promoting the Vice President because of my experience with Vice President Cheney. We do not have a Nuclear Detection Office unless he got involved in the conversation in the White House and he advocated on the Hill some of the initiatives around biodefense, BioShield and the like. His staff was critically important in design and affecting. So I really think with the appropriate support, it is an office that can really make a huge difference.

I guess in the world understanding and appreciating the process, a Cabinet—first of all, the Cabinet members, they project a budget based on what they view to be the institutional needs and what they want to do. I got that. I did it. Cabinet Secretaries do that.

But then I see the Vice President taking a look at the line items from HHS and Agriculture and DHS and the Department of Defense (DOD) and the rest of them, mapping what they want as opposed to the national strategy and see how those requests for dollars line up with the national strategy. And I suspect there will be some inconsistencies, and so I would like to see the inconsistencies resolved in the President's budget that he submits to Congress. There will be turf battles and financial battles, but you do not get things done in this town unless you control the purse strings. I just think having somebody who works so closely with the President and OMB, I think he could probably shuffle some money around in a way that may annoy or aggravate a Secretary or two or an agency or two, but, again, it is not about them. It is about the broader mission of building an architecture and a response capability to bio.

So I think it would work very well. You do not have to go outside the existing budget process. I think you let the Secretaries do what they do, and then you let the Vice President realign, consistent with that overall national strategy, which is probably going to take another year or two to develop, I understand that. But I think it is appropriately placed within that office.

Chairman JOHNSON. I am sure Senator Lieberman, when he was Chairman of this Committee, valued the GAO as much as we do. And certainly we have seen study after study of duplicated programs in the Federal Government, so your recommendation, again, as I was reading my embargoed copy, that does seem to be the strongest recommendation about that unified organization, that unified leadership. And from my standpoint, I think you make a strong argument. If anything, it would save you money because you eliminate a lot of that duplicated effort, so you have more money to actually effectively utilize to fight the threats.

One thing I was mindful of as I was going through that my embargoed copy was the number of hearings you were suggesting, and I just did my own little mental calculation. I think it was 11 out of 15. It suggested that the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee hold those hearings. With that Vice President in charge, what department do you think would be pretty much the go-to department? I mean, I realize there is a lot of authority spread all over the place, but just based on kind of the hearing schedule, it seems like the Department of Homeland Security would be pretty key, although in your testimony you were talking about HHS. Can you give me some sort of sense in terms of, even within a department, where an awful lot of your recommendations are going to reside?

Governor RIDGE. Well, I do not think we can possibly—a lot of it has to do with what they decide is the national strategy. I think there are three or four that could have a dominant position to play. Our warfighters keep looking at this. They want to be able to detect on the battlefield and respond and recover. Because of our concern and connection with the zoonotic transfer from animals, Ag has to have a significant role in here, and DHS. So I am not necessarily sure there has to be an epicenter of one department. I do think, however, there has to be more than rhetorical coordination. There actually has to be real coordination, which means that the programs really should not be redundant, but they ought to be ac-

tually integrated. And so I am not prepared to say that one department or another, because I think you could see three or four critical departments. And, again, that leads us back to the Vice President.

Chairman JOHNSON. You have to have that top—

Governor Ridge. So, I mean, listen, I know all about turf fights within the executive branch. It happens all the time.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So, to a certain extent, probably the wrong way to describe it, we backed into the recommendation that the Vice President be the leader of this effort, because every time—even the natural department, if you were going to choose a department to lead it, would be the Department of Homeland Security, because this biodefense is an element of homeland security. But then Homeland Security has to start saying to somebody at HHS or the Department of Agriculture, "This program of yours is not working. There is too much money in it. We have to pull money out and put it into BioWatch in the DHS." That puts DHS in a hard position and why we thought it had to be elevated, as Governor Ridge said, to the Vice Presidency.

Chairman JOHNSON. OK. Just real quick, with the few seconds I have remaining, you mentioned Ebola. Did your Panel take a look at how far we have progressed in terms of a potential vaccine? I have asked this of others as well. But what is your input on that, the progress made?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well, we understand that there is a vaccine coming along, but I am actually thinking more about—yes, OK. So the vaccine is coming along, but it has not been approved yet. And the sooner the better.

Governor RIDGE. And it is 14 years after the Federal Government said this is a potential problem.

Chairman JOHNSON. Senator Carper.

Senator CARPER. Thanks. Thanks so much. I want to go back to mention something that is not part of biosecurity, but something that both of you played a real big role in, and that is, the work that we accomplished yesterday in the Senate on information sharing, cybersecurity information sharing. And I remember well when Joe Lieberman was leading this Committee the efforts that you and Dianne Feinstein, and myself and others helped, but I wish you could have been here with us yesterday when it all came to fruition, and you laid the groundwork. And Governor Ridge was part of—actually, I think sort of the face for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for supporting the efforts, and we are just grateful to each of you for your contribution. I said yesterday it was one of my happiest days in my 15 years in the Senate, and you all played a big role in getting us on the right path, so thanks.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Senator Carper, and thank you for your leadership on this. I probably would have been happier if I was on the floor with you yesterday, but I was pretty happy following it. It is a really significant accomplishment.

Incidentally, I just quickly related there is a lot of connection of cybersecurity to biosecurity, and in the most direct way here, if you have a company dealing with pathogens or even vaccines, let us say, preventive activity, and they are hacked, right now they are probably going to be nervous about calling the government because

they are going to reveal things that could subject them to liability. Well, when this legislation is law, that is open.

And, of course, what that means from the government point of view is that you can begin to notice patterns of what is being hacked and wonder about where it is coming from and find out where it is coming from.

So the implications, it is a really substantial accomplishment, and I really congratulate all of you on it.

Senator CARPER. Thank you. I asked my staff to help me reach out to the Vice President later this week, and guess what we are going to talk about? We are going to talk about this.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Great.

Senator CARPER. And I would ask you to do a little bit of role playing here with us for a minute and just anticipate for us that conversation when we talk to the Vice President—

Governor RIDGE. You came to it a lot closer than I did, so you can play the role. [Laughter.]

Senator CARPER. Anticipate what the Vice President is going to say, and then what should we say to try to convince him to take this on?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well, so this is a very personal reaction. I would say this Vice President, Joe Biden, might be—I hope—sort of intrigued by this because, this is specific.

Senator CARPER. Maybe if I mention avian influenza right at the top. All politics is local.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Make it close to home. But let us say it is a Vice President—and, incidentally, to be clear, we did some legal research on this. We decided it is the better part of wisdom here and probably law that the Congress cannot mandate that the Vice President take on this responsibility. This is really an appeal to the President to designate the Vice President to do this.

I think that Vice President Biden might be challenged and intrigued by this possibility and want to see if in his last year in office he can bring this together to work better.

I suppose if you had a virtual Vice President, he might say or she might say, “Why are you giving me this responsibility? This is the beginning of your going to make me into the new Super Czar?” Obviously, that is up to the President, and the President has priorities. But as a choice between creating a new czar and making the Vice President of the United States now and in the future responsible for some critical areas, coordinating them, I would choose the Vice President.

Senator CARPER. Good. Governor, do you want to add anything to that?

Governor RIDGE. Just I like the word that the Senator used: “intrigued.” The architecture that we are talking about requires a lot of engagement at the Federal level and State and local levels. That means obviously the Vice President will have some pretty good political connections, having obviously prevailed in a national election. And that integration of those government capabilities and the ability to move among the Cabinet agencies and also to engage, to build. I would like to think that any Vice President would welcome the opportunity to build, not unilaterally but with everybody else, to build a platform to deal with a real substantive threat to the na-

tional security and economic security of this country and would take it on obviously as a cause celebre—not that he does not have other things to do, but give that individual, who obviously is interested in both politics and governing, the opportunity, now that they have won the competitive side in politics, a chance to really do some substantive work on the governing side. And I think that would certainly appeal, I think, to most.

Senator CARPER. OK. Thanks.

What do you see is the most likely form that a biological threat would take? And a related followup: In your opinions, have the risks associated with biological materials increased over time? And why?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well, I will start, Senator Carper. On page 1 of this report, we have a scenario, which we made up, fortunately, but we think it is plausible, of the opening statement of the chairman of a congressional investigation that begins 9 weeks after terrorists unleash a biological attack on our Nation's capital. And there it was a multifaceted—in this scenario, which is plausible, it was a multifaceted attack that began with aerosol sprays and also, unfortunately, was comprised of essentially poisoning or infecting of animal populations with diseases that would be communicated to people.

So, I mean, the problem here is, as Tom said in his opening statement, that some big powers have this capacity, dual-use capacity. It is certainly not as complicated as building a nuclear weapon—to build the capacity to carry out a biological attack. And, of course, it is easier either to get into the country, sneak it into the country, or to build it here.

So I would say that the threat of a bioterrorist attack is greater than it has been, and I would also say, without belaboring the point, that the threat from a naturally occurring biological attack, which is to say an infectious disease pandemic, is greater, just to state it summarily, because we are all traveling more, we are moving around the world, and we are bringing disease along with us. And it is amazing. A word that I came to appreciate a lot during our study was "zoonotic." I do not know if I knew that word before, but this is a disease that is conveyed from animals to people, particularly by migratory bird populations. It is really quite threatening. And I guess the birds are traveling as much or more than they ever have, too, so that threat is greater than ever.

Governor RIDGE. Senator, I do not think we can discount, given the nature of the world today, some of these pathogens, either, leaving the laboratories of the Nation State and particularly ending up in the hands of terrorist organizations. Holding them precisely accountable for their actions is pretty difficult, attributing and then holding them accountable. So I think we cannot underestimate that possibility.

I happen to believe that the science has changed dramatically, and we also know that in recent history you had scientists in certain parts of the world with minimal capacities, but with the advance of technology, are able to do some rather—to manipulate matters and create problems that are presently perhaps unforeseen.

It is very interesting. I do encourage, if Congress does not read the entire blueprint, they ought to read the two-page scenario that we tried to set up as a plausible scenario. It is the Nipah virus. It is in pigs. It is in Southeast Asia. And it would not take too much to genetically engineer it, and once it is in the system—and it was interesting that those called before the Governmental Affairs Committee 9 weeks after it happens are the Governors of the four States that got hit. The second panel was the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense (SECDEF), the Attorney General (AG), and the Director of National Intelligence (DNI). And the third is the Secretary of Ag, Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Secretary of Homeland Security. That shows you the totality of the groups and people interested in this and one more reason why we hope the President would encourage the Vice President to take the task on.

So we should take the words of the 9/11 Commission. One observation they made I think is relevant to this discussion. They concluded the Federal Government suffered pre-9/11 from “the failure of imagination.” It does not take much to imagine the pathogen finding its way to a terrorist organization, and we know Mother Nature—I mean, Mother Nature keeps playing around with H1N1 every year. And, by the way, let us think about that. Two years ago, we were advised that it would be potentially a more virulent strain of H1N1. Remember we had notice? And remember we did not have the vaccines ready for it? That is just Mother Nature.

So a lot of work needs to be done. A lot of good people for the past 15 years have put their best foot forward, but they are not marching in unison. Senator Lieberman and I kind of look at as you get all these good people out there in organizations, they are like in the orchestra, but their sheet music is all different, and they have no conductor. Well, we want everybody playing off the same sheet of music, and we want the Vice President to conduct the song.

Senator CARPER. Thank you.

Chairman JOHNSON. Senator Ernst.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR ERNST

Senator ERNST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you so much for being here this afternoon. This is a really fascinating topic and one that we really do need to pay attention to.

Now, your Panel also made a recommendation to implement military-civilian collaboration for biodefense, and I sit on both the Armed Services Committee and on this Committee of Homeland Security, and as a veteran, I would really be interested to learn more about this particular recommendation and the level of military and civilian collaboration that you have seen in the past, where we really need to take that for the future, and what we can do better in those areas. Senator Lieberman, if you would start, please?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks very much, Senator Ernst. So here is an example. You will see in our report that we are critical of the so-called BioWatch program which the Department of Homeland Security operates, which was supposed to be an early detection sys-

tem for biological pathogens in the air. Our judgment is that it is an old system, it is using old technology, and, frankly, it is not up to the challenge. It is not doing the job.

At the same time, we found that the U.S. military is doing some aggressive, cutting-edge work on detecting biological pathogens in the air with the first natural priority being, concern being, to protect the men and women of the U.S. military either in conflict or in areas where they may be subject to biological attack. And the military is way ahead, in our opinion, of what the Department of Homeland Security has in the BioWatch program.

So there is a case where we think that we are wasting money on BioWatch, to put it bluntly, and that this seems like a natural collaboration if we could take some of the breakthrough technologies that are being developed in the Department of Defense and allow them through collaboration to be applied to the domestic challenge.

Tom, do you want to comment?

Governor RIDGE. Senator, I understand next year will be your 26th in your service?

Senator ERNST. 24.

Governor RIDGE. 24? Well, thank you very much.

Senator LIEBERMAN. You must have been very young when you went—

Senator ERNST. I was maybe 12. [Laughter.]

Senator LIEBERMAN. That is what I would have guessed.

Senator ERNST. Thank you. You are very kind.

Governor RIDGE. Your record of public service obviously precedes it here, so I thank you for that, one soldier to another.

A couple thoughts, if I might. I think Senator Lieberman highlighted it quite well. We know the DOD—we do everything we can to protect our warfighters, and their investment in their Defense Advanced Research Program with regard to early detection on the battlefield I am quite confident has led to discoveries or learning relative to medical countermeasures. So somehow the biological contaminant gets past the protective gear, I mean, just even protective gear alone. So you see technology, you see protective gear, you see probably the advance of medical countermeasures.

I remember as Governor of Pennsylvania and then as Secretary, we witnessed some exercises where the National Guard in respective States had WMD response and recovery capability. There is learning there, as well as capacity to help the State and locals respond if there is an event. And so I think while they may be—I think they are at—the epicenter of a lot of this work, and one of the frustrations that I think we have had in the Federal Government is that a lot of this work is always siloed. And, if it has an application at DOD, maybe the form may change a little bit, but it ought to be at DHS, it ought to be in the civilian world.

So I think there is a lot of learning in the area of technology, protective gear, response and recovery capability, medical countermeasures, getting DOD integrating some of its learning with not only Federal agencies but with the State and locals will just enhance their capability.

Senator ERNST. Well, and, Governor, you led to my next question as well. With the siloing effect that we have in so many of our

agencies across the Federal Government, how does the Federal Government do a better job at working with our State and local officials? You mentioned the National Guard. Every State has a civil support team that deals with nuclear, biological, radiological episodes and can respond. And they are at the cutting edge. How do we take some of that knowledge and share it with those local emergency management coordinators at the county? We have to do a better job at that. And do you see that there are ways that we can break out of those silos and really effectively communicate across those various levels of coordination and effort?

Governor RIDGE. Well, first of all, I think they have to have a significant presence on the Biodefense Coordination Council because they are every bit as important to delivering particularly the response and recovery, although they do need intelligence and you need to bolster the public health capability clearly. They need to be invited in to participate and viewed not as an adjunct to what the Federal Government is doing but as a partner. I do not believe that the Federal Government—we cannot secure the country from bioweapons and pathogens inside the Beltway. And as we all know, the first responders are back home at the local level, then the State level. They are the first in and the last out.

Senator ERNST. Right.

Governor RIDGE. And I know one of the challenges we have had historically is that there has been a second or third variation of the National Incident Management System, but it is pretty clear, at least in response to Ebola, that maybe there had not been enough outreach to the State and locals dealing with that kind of challenge at the local level. They joined later on.

So I think if you invite it, you will find many willing participants, and I think we need to see them as a resource. And I am going back to my experience as Secretary of Homeland Security. You cannot secure the country as strong as we are and as big as our budgets are, the number of programs we have, you cannot do it from inside D.C.

Senator ERNST. Exactly.

Governor RIDGE. You better look at the Governors and the mayors and the public health people as partners, not as “we will get to you later.” No, no, no. You get to them now. And I think they will respond very favorably.

Senator ERNST. I do think that is a great point, and I would love to see that level of cooperation amongst all of our governmental officials and those that are responding to the crises.

Of course, Senator Carper, we have the avian influenza that hit Iowa very hard, about 48 million birds or so that were lost. Two-thirds of those birds that were lost were from Iowa. So it hit very hard, and we really needed to see multiple levels of coordination.

Governor RIDGE. To that point, if I might, there is one recommendation we have not brought up. The Senator alluded to it. We do not have a national animal disease surveillance database.

Senator ERNST. Right.

Governor RIDGE. We do not.

Senator ERNST. Right. Something very basic.

Governor RIDGE. We have seen—particularly if you believe, as the scientists say, that 99.9 percent of those pathogens thatulti-

mately affect humans come out of—their etiology is in—animals. So why don't we complement what we know about human disease with animal disease? Because I suspect people a heck of a lot smarter than I am, which is a ton of them, might be able to see the connection and even anticipate some problems.

Senator ERNST. I think this is a great recommendation.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So you want to know if there is an infectious disease epidemic beginning to spread in the country. You want to know if there is evidence of a biological attack, which, of course, is not visible until people start to show the symptoms of it. And this will happen always at the State and local level. So for that kind of timely warning to be able to deal with the kind of crisis before it spreads, you have to have State and local people involved.

I will say that there are some States—I do not know the number—that already have the kind of registry or database on a real-time basis of animal disease that we are recommending for the Federal Government. So, some of these States are ahead of us, for the same reason that we want to do this nationally, because they want to see something happening before it begins to spread to other animals and our other populations of animals, of the same animal or to people.

Senator ERNST. Yes, well, thank you, gentlemen. I appreciate your efforts on this project, and hopefully we can see some of these recommendations into fruition. So thank you.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

Governor RIDGE. Thank you, Senator.

Senator ERNST. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman JOHNSON. Senator Heitkamp.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HEITKAMP

Senator HEITKAMP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you both for your work on this effort. I think it is something that I think gets ignored, to our peril, and having such high level analysis and bipartisan analysis, I think, is hugely helpful. With that said, I recently participated in an hour-long discussion with the head of the World Bank, Dr. Kim, who I do not know if you are familiar with him, but he is basically a prominent infectious disease physician. He also brings some interesting kind of geopolitical understanding to that role.

When asked what he thought was the greatest economic vulnerability in the world, he said pandemic. And I think we sometimes just focus on health, but we do not realize that the economic implications of a pandemic will be absolutely devastating, especially in the developing world. And we asked him a series of questions about where he saw the next outbreak, what the next kind of cutting edge concern was that he had. He talked about flu and he talked about a number of other things.

And I think it is interesting because as we prepare for our national defense, we cannot do this without preparing for an international defense, whether it is, in fact, providing food security in areas where people basically have had their economies shut down, or whether it is—so that people stay in place, that we do not see a migration, we do not see continuing spread of infectious disease,

and then also, taking a look at preparedness, not just prevention, but preparedness.

And so I am wondering, in the work that you did, as you looked at the scenarios, you looked at the potential issues that could come up, whether you spent any time kind of saying, These are the five likely next things beyond Ebola that could happen, let us run the scenario on how that happens, because we know most of these pandemics, most of these concerns actually originate in the developing world.

And I do not care which one of you take on that question, but I am curious about how we reach beyond the work that you have done to get a world prepared for a pandemic.

Senator LIEBERMAN. That is a great question. So incidentally, I want to just sort of put an exclamation point, Senator Heitkamp, after your first point, which is that this is a threat on the bioterrorist side of it that is really under-appreciated by the population, in part, because, Thank God, much to our surprise since the anthrax attacks right here on Capitol Hill in 2011, we have not had a biological attack, which everybody—not everybody—but most experts would have guessed at that point that would have happened. So it seems a little bit distant.

However, although people do not want to live every day with this fear, the reaction that I saw to the Ebola crisis last year was really panic. So I think people are fearful, at least when it begins to happen, of the threat of a pandemic outbreak. I am struck by what you said Dr. Kim said and he is probably right. I mean, some people—there are other examples, but really, it is a threat in terms of dislocating.

So I do not know that we listed, in terms of probabilities, what is next. There are some things going on now—sorry that Senator Carper is not here because I have learned about a disease moving to the United States called chikungunya. It has nothing to do with chicken. Is it originally an African word? I think so. Yes. But meaning something entirely different, but it threatens us now. We are not really ready for it.

So that is one. It is beginning to be seen in the southern part of our country, particularly around Florida. So you want to?

Governor RIDGE. I do. I do have the benefit—well, the good Senator who was responding to your question had the benefit of taking a look at my recommendations, and I think if you will look at 7(c) and 33, I mean, I think this demonstrates the extent to which this extraordinary group of Americans looked across the board at as wide a range of issues it could possibly cover.

But we do think that it is important, in 7(c) if you have it there, prioritize emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, where we ask the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in coordination with Ag. and Defense, to prioritize these emerging infectious diseases. And then we turn quickly—and there is more to that—then you turn to Recommendation 33 and this is probably more to your point, Senator.

Somebody needs to provide international leadership on this issue. The United States of America seems to be the country that should do so, and we think we ought to build, with our friends in the global community, perhaps through the State Department, whoever, a

functional and agile global public health response apparatus to include the convening of human and animal health leaders from around the world to help start to set some of these priorities.

You also see it as an adjunct to this, we think the intelligence community (IC), even within the United States, does not pay enough attention to this. Probably this has a lot to do with the fact that it is, one is probably resources, and two it is important, but it is not that important for us to be really paying a lot of attention to this. And I think if you can have a global database.

If you can convene annual leaders, particularly in these countries, the emerging countries, you can get that kind of collaboration. To your point, America provides a leadership, but given the globalization of these pandemics, we are all potentially affected.

Senator HEITKAMP. Just as you have looked for a home, where is the point, the immediate point of accountability, which is the addressing of this device present? And the immediate point of accountability to help prepare, but also to orchestrate and to have the clout to effectuate a response, we do not have that on an international level.

And that lack of leadership on the international level, I think, makes us much—we can do all these things that you are suggesting, but until we actually build from these efforts, take these same ideas and build out in a global sense, we will be only as secure as one border crossing.

And so I think it is critically important that this work not stop at this point where we are just looking at what is happening within our borders, that we heed his warning and heed the warning of a lot of people who deal with infectious diseases, especially as it relates to flu and the eventual antibiotic resistant kinds of diseases that we anticipate we are breeding, that we actually have a global response and we have a point of accountability in global response.

And I think that is trickier because as we know—there is a cop on the beat in the United States of America because we are a country that is rule of law—there is no one global cop on the beat. And if we do not recognize that, we really threaten our security, I think.

Senator LIEBERMAN. That is an excellent point. The obvious candidate internationally to do that is the World Health Organization (WHO), but it does not have the rule of law authority that the U.S. Government has here. As I was listening to you, in some sense, we thought about protecting the people of America from infectious disease pandemics that are coming either by birds or animals or people from elsewhere in the world.

I think we have assumed that—we have not assumed help from overseas. We have sort of assumed—we have to be ready to deal with it here and how do we deal with it here. In the 33d, the last recommendation that Tom referred to, we do ask the Secretary of State to convene a meeting of global experts in animal and human health to talk about the interaction, also what could be done globally to stop the outbreaks.

The truth is, there was some effective work done on Ebola in Africa, even though 6,000 people died. But when it started, just listening to the news, it sounded like it could be much worse. So Dr. Kim actually is a great person to lead this because this is his field and I hope he will.

Senator HEITKAMP. I am sure he would be glad that you volunteered him, Senator.

Governor RIDGE. It is one more reason, though, I think to have the Vice President involved. If the Vice President shows up arm-in-arm with the Secretary of State, you are speaking with the authority of the President of the United States, and you want to convene at the highest level, you are going to get there.

The other advantage, I think, of America being much more aggressive externally is that if we come up with these medical countermeasures available to the world, I think that is an extension of our value system that is every bit as important as any other thing we do. And finally, with your very appropriate comments with regard to identifying the threats and emerging diseases in these countries, I always view our borders as the last line of defense, because we know the threat is out there, so we use the military and everybody else to try to deal with terrorism before it brings, the horror to our shores.

We need to take the same mind set and say, "Look, no matter what we do here to detect and prevent and prepare, we are going to have to respond, to recovery but we just cannot be thinking of ourselves internally. The threat is global and in many areas in the emerging countries, so we have to pay a lot more attention than we ever have in the past.

Senator HEITKAMP. I do not think there is any doubt about it.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you.

Chairman JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Heitkamp. As long as we are talking globally, and Senator Lieberman, you mentioned the World Health Organization, I think it is widely recognized that with Ebola outbreak, the World Health Organization did not exactly respond the way the world would have liked. Do you believe that is the organization where this global database and this response really should emanate from, or do you think it is just not a reformable organization and we have to look to something else?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Right. So we did not really dig into that deeply. I mean, I had the same impression that you did, that the WHO did not respond as well or as quickly as we would have liked. I do not know what the alternatives are unless people acted through the U.N. and created some separate entity. But I think we have just got to try to make it better and to understand. I do not know if you can think of anything else globally.

Governor RIDGE. No. I mean, the bottom line is that the world is paying a lot closer attention to cyber threats, a lot closer attention to the threat of terrorism, the threat of nuclear proliferation. But globally, the threat is under-appreciated and it will take strong leadership. I mean, we want America to get back engaged. We do not normally show up. They meet every couple of years on the treaty with regard to bio weapons, and while we know that some of the participants have signed the treaty are building the dual capacity, we still ought to show a face there.

We have to be much more aggressive with regard to the World Trade Organization (WTO). So I cannot think of another organization. We do not have time to create a new one. We just ought to extract as much information and get as much benefit, because I do think the organization may not be the rallying point, but it could

be used as a bully pulpit for us and we have to convene leaders from these countries that are really concerned. And we can do that independently of WTO, that is for sure.

Chairman JOHNSON. Well, you repeated the phrase, failure of imagination. I think it is denial of reality. Some of these things are just so horrific to even think about, that will never happen. You have to recognize that yes, it might. Did you do any work or did you take a look at the possibility of stockpiling medicines? You mentioned anthrax. I know we did not have enough Cipro at the time. Where are we in terms of potentially stockpiling preventative medicines or cures?

Governor Ridge. Well, we did take a look and made some recommendations with regard to the national stockpile. One, we do not have that much stockpile. Again, our medical countermeasures are really in the embryonic stage right now. We have not even identified those potential pathogens with which we think there needs to be innovation and an antidote developed.

We also recognize that even if you have the right materials stockpiled, we still have not figured out a way to distribute it, mass population. We have tried the Postal Service. We have tried a couple of others. There is some learning there. So again, it is part of the response and recovery recommendations we make to revisit that issue and pay a lot more attention to it than we have in the past.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I do want to mention—it is not directly responsive, but it is related—that it happens that Senator Ayotte and Senator Booker have introduced a bill for the Department of Homeland Security to reach into its stockpile of anthrax vaccine and provide it for first responders across the country. Now, part of this is because parts of the stockpile are coming to the point—

Chairman JOHNSON. Getting old.

Senator LIEBERMAN. They are getting old, right. So we might as well use them for that purpose. But we are not—I mean, one of the major recommendations that comes out of this is that we still have not figured out how to leverage the ingenuity and innovation of the pharmaceutical sector of our economy to get involved in developing medical countermeasures to diseases that in some sense are hypothetical.

We do not know that it is going to happen. And we have tried different ways to incentivize businesses to do that. Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) has been the instrument of that and I think we have a feeling that we ought to, as much as we respect the National Institutes of Health (NIH)—now I am going to join you in getting in trouble.

Governor RIDGE. We respect them, but we also think that there is a disproportionate emphasis placed on basic research and not enough with regard to applied.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes.

Governor RIDGE. You take a look at what NIH gets and Dr. Fauci is an incredible public servant, NIH has existed for over 100 years, but its mission, original mission has been expanded across. They are not coordinating activity within the Federal Government. It is much too big for NIH.

So again, when we devised this architecture and approach, we were not looking to spend a lot of new money. We think just re-programming some of it, and that is a classic example and I think, Senator, I do not mean to interrupt him, but I think we felt that there is not enough innovation in the marketplace. And the market will not really respond, first of all, just to even get access to some of the dollars for research.

The process is just constipated. I mean, it is like paperwork and paperwork and paperwork and who knows if you are going to get at the outcome. We want to take the contracting authority from HHS and put it over in BARDA. But I would like to think that as part of the building of a new strategy, you would sit down, not only with the big pharmas, but sit down with a small company. They are more inclined to be focusing on one antidote, one or two vaccines and what do they need to have an incentive. The incentive just cannot be the market because there is no market.

Chairman JOHNSON. Right.

Governor RIDGE. And you hope there will never be a market for it. So what is it that we have to do to encourage you to expend the dollars necessary to build that countermeasure? Why do you not tell them the story about when you were with your colleague, you wanted to extend the patent life in order to—great story.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Oh, yes. Thank you. So a few months after 9/11, and the anthrax attacks really after 9/11, I do not know if Chuck Ludlum is here. He worked with me in my office. And we were talking about the problem that there were not medical—pharmaceutical countermeasures and how do we create a market incentive where there is no natural market incentive for pharmaceutical companies to devote research to this.

So he came up with the idea—of course, at the time I took credit for it. He came up with the idea that we should create a process where a company develops a proposal for a medical countermeasure. They go to HHS, stating this simplistically, and if they cross the threshold of plausibility, then they are put on a track, and if they do develop an effective medical countermeasure, then their reward is—because they still do not know whether there is a market—that they can then take one of their drugs, presumably one of the more popular drugs, and extend the patent life, I think we said for a year, maybe 2 years, but a year.

So this seemed like a very logical idea, to create an incentive for pharmaceutical companies to get into this area where there is no guaranteed market.

Chairman JOHNSON. So again, that is for potentially development, but again, stockpiling. About the only entity, the only market would be for government to start stockpiling something that expires.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Just keep buying it, that is right.

Chairman JOHNSON. That is just a natural contract.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So what happened was that this brilliant idea of ours did not seem so brilliant to the generic drug industry which did not want the patent life extended.

Chairman JOHNSON. They are always interested.

Senator LIEBERMAN. And they came over the Hill like a cavalry and that was the end of that idea.

Chairman JOHNSON. Well, good try.

Chairman JOHNSON. Nice try.

Governor RIDGE. Maybe, perhaps, one of these days with science and technology moving as quickly as it is, we will be a lot closer to vaccines on demand if somewhere, not necessarily in the government, but out there in the private sector, we have this collaborative research capability based on priorities, based on information, based on intelligence. But for the time being, we are just going to have to go to the stockpile mode, but I think in years ahead, we might be able to come up with a better way than that to maybe incentivize.

Chairman JOHNSON. Well, I will think liability protection would be somewhat key to that as well. Senator Carper.

Senator CARPER. Just a reminder. We have a facility located close to the University of Delaware where we have a number of bio-science companies and large, not so large, but mid-sized and small. One of them actually works on developing plant-based vaccines, not using eggs, but using, among other things, tobacco plants and being able to create vaccines more quickly and a variety of them.

When I first visited them years ago, I wondered, this might come in handy someday, and they have done pretty well to advance their strategy. So I think I am going to pay them another visit just based on what we are talking about here. I would ask you a question and I just want you to answer it shortly.

We all have a chance in what we have done and what you all have done is visit schools. I love to visit schools from grade schools all the way up through college. But sometimes the kids ask me for advice or I have just given them advice. One time a kid said he was trying to decide what to do with his life and he wanted my advice. He was going to do this, he was going to do that. And I said to him, Aim high, aim high, there is more room up there. Aim high.

And the idea of asking the Vice President or encouraging the President to direct the Vice President to take the lead on this, that is aiming high. What if neither the President nor the Vice President have any interest in the Vice President doing this? What would be Plan B?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well, I hate to use the term—maybe I will not use the term—Plan B would be somebody like the czar, I mean, somebody in the White House so that they had the implicit authority of the Presidency to coordinate. Again, I think the conclusion we reach is you cannot take somebody in one of the departments and put them over everybody else in the various departments.

Senator CARPER. If I could interrupt just for a moment? The legislation that we passed last year, Dr. Coburn and I authored, co-authored it, on trying to figure out on the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), the question of what is the appropriate role for OMB and the Department of Homeland Security with respect to Federal information management.

And we included there language that basically said, DHS has the authority to direct agencies. We had a term for it. What was the term? Binding operational directives, binding operational directives, to really tell the agencies what they had to do. So there is a precedent for that.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So I mentioned before that if you had to choose one department, it would be the Department of Homeland Security because this is a homeland security threat. Some of this, incidentally, also implicates a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) responsibility because of emergency reaction to, let us say, a bioterrorist attack or a pandemic disease outbreak. But I think it is still hard in this kind of case to ask one of the departments to assume a superior role to the others.

Senator CARPER. All right.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Again, I guess the hierarchy for us would be—we have not really explored this—Vice President, somebody in the National Security Council so you have the implicit—although Governor Ridge, really explained why you can only go so far. There he was in the White House, have a meeting in the Roosevelt Room that impressed people, but he did not have that authority that the Vice President has.

Governor RIDGE. Maybe one example my friend rated. I remember—no reason for you to know this, but long before we passed the Department of Homeland Security, months and months before that, I convened the President's Homeland Security Group, probably a half to two-thirds of the Cabinet, because there had been multiple studies, some of them mandated by Congress, a lot of the think tanks, in a 21st Century world, building a border-centric agency. It makes a lot of sense. Kind of monitor the goods and people it served coming across the border. Fine.

And I sent out a memo and announced that I wanted to—I felt we ought to—collaborate, communicate, hold hands, sing Kumbaya, I want part of your agency, I do not want part of your agency, I would like some money here and I would like to see some money there.

And the answer I got from everybody except Paul O'Neill was, "No, we just need to communicate better, we need to coordinate better." Nobody wanted to give up turf, nobody. Fast forward 4 or 5 months. Roosevelt Room, same people are in the room, one additional person, happens to be the President of the United States. We are sending a piece of legislation up to the Hill tomorrow, whenever, we are going to create a Department of Homeland Security.

I know you are going to be shocked. Unanimous support for that initiative. Why? Because the President said, this is what we are going to do. That is why we feel so strongly that it is imperative for the President, hopefully, and a willing Vice President to volunteer. It is everything I would think a Vice President would want to do. You have domestic and international, you have Federal, State, and local, you interact with the corporate community. You have to lead an effort globally and extend America's influence in a very positive way.

I would like to think that the next President, regardless of what side of the aisle they come from, will be persuasive enough and the Vice President would be willing enough, to take it on. Because once it is embedded, I think you have the infrastructure you need to really do something about this threat.

Senator CARPER. OK. Thank you. One of the more noteworthy recommendations coming from the panel is the suggestion of uni-

fying the bio threats strategies both for animals and for human beings. I think you call the approach One Health?

Governor RIDGE. One Health.

Senator LIEBERMAN. One Health.

Senator CARPER. That would allow government to better track and combat animal-based disease outbreaks. Two questions. One, how do you envision this strategy working amongst the different agencies responsible for animal and for human health programs? And two, what programs do you think should be prioritized? Two questions. How do you envision this strategy working amongst the different agencies responsible for animal and for human health programs and which programs do you think should be prioritized?

Governor RIDGE. Let me take a shot at that first. First of all, I think the recommendation is really to have us think about the connectivity among the three elements, environment, animals, and humans, because right now, like everything else, it is all siloed. So as you are building out this national platform, I think, to the extent that some of these agencies interact with all three, we would want to assimilate the information, have the analysis done with that in mind. I do not have any specific recommendations as to how they prioritize in it, inside of it, but it is just a change in mentality.

Right now we are not paying any attention to animal health. There is very little consideration internally within any of these agencies or appreciation that most of your problems emanate in animals and in wildlife. But we do not really view that as part of the intellectual infrastructure around which we build a platform of medical countermeasures or even gather intelligence, let alone response and recovery mechanisms. So I think it has much to do with changing an approach toward any particular initiative.

Senator CARPER. Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. No, I think that is the main point, to recognize the divisions between human health and animal health or human disease and animal disease are artificial. So you have to deal with them together. I just want to talk about what we are talking about here. We are asking the Vice President to direct the National Security Council to review all strategic biodefense documents. This is an example, to answer your question, to ensure that animal health and environmental health agencies are identified and assign responsibilities and that their activities are fully aligned.

And then, Mr. Chairman, two down in terms of action items, this is a response to an earlier question you asked which we did not have an answer to because there is not an answer right now, prioritize emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases. And to do that by combining the efforts of the Secretary of HHS, the Secretary of Agriculture, and interestingly and relevantly, the Secretary of Defense.

I think this is something that people are not adequately aware of, but more to the point, it is not the awareness which is reality. It is not being reflected in a way our government is acting and, therefore, we are both wasting resources, but we are also not preparing ourselves adequately to deal with threats to animals and humans.

Chairman JOHNSON. Thank you. I know I stole this from Chairman Carper, he might have stolen this from you.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Yes.

Chairman JOHNSON. Another tradition of this Committee is basically to give our witnesses kind of one last shot, so if there is something you have not mentioned if you want to kind of summarize your points, happy to give you an opportunity before we close out the hearing. We will start with you, Governor Ridge.

Governor RIDGE. No, I just think that we are looking for champions, Senator. What we thought, what we have analyzed, the go-ahead plan, it is all here. We know that you and Senator Carper are going to take it seriously. We hope that through your advocacy and that of others within this body and over in the House we can find some champions to affect this.

This is a real threat. We cannot get ahead of it because it exists and we just need folks, hopefully, to take this blueprint seriously, and act on it. I do not want this to be the fifth report that ends up on the shelf gathering dust by the time we acted on it. We thank you. This is the first public action and it is in the right Committee of jurisdiction, because I think it may be a long time since I looked at your jurisdictional aperture, but I think you could call it—

Chairman JOHNSON. It is broad.

Governor RIDGE. I think you can call them all in if you want. I mean, you could have SECDEF, HHS, you can have them all here and say, The Vice President's plan said you ought to do this and you are not doing that. Why not?

Chairman JOHNSON. You should take comfort in the fact that I was really focusing on the hearings you were recommending, so you probably found your champions. Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks for the opportunity, Mr. Chairman. So with your permission, I am going to tell a story that is only remotely relevant, but he inspired it with that story.

Chairman JOHNSON. Senator Carper does that all the time.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I know.

Senator CARPER. That was what I learned from Joe Lieberman.

Chairman JOHNSON. There is nothing wrong with Tom in inspiring me. It is an old technique.

Senator LIEBERMAN. So Governor Ridge told this great story about the planning at the White House for the proposal for a new Department of Homeland Security and how the Cabinet did not know about it. So we had our bill on the floor for the Department of Homeland—or out, anyway.

I have a specific recollection, after President Bush put out the proposal that you have just described for the Department of Homeland Security, a day or two later the late, great Senator Robert C. Byrd took the floor and he said, "Where did this proposal come from?—" He said, "I have been informed that not even members of President Bush's Cabinet knew it was coming. There was some small group of people in a room, a closed room in the White House somewhere."

And I can hear Senator Byrd on the floor saying, "Who was there? Was Hamilton there? Was Madison there? Was Washington there? Was Jefferson there? I realize now I am at the table with

Thomas Jefferson. He was there. OK." So thank you for allowing me that freedom of expression, old war stories. We miss Senator Byrd, really. He was something. God bless him.

So I just echo what Tom said. We need champions. And I will say this. We both approached this, the request to co-chair this operation, with the sort of skepticism or questioning that one has in this life after public office, which is, "Is this really going to matter? Is it worth my time? Are we going to do anything?" But we were worried enough about the problem that we took it on. And I must say, for my part, part of it was frankly to work with Tom Ridge again.

But at the end of this, now the day that we issued our report, I think we come away feeling this is a real threat to our country, not enough is being done about it, and it would be irresponsible—we are asking you to be champions, it would be irresponsible of us to leave the field, drop the report and go back to whatever we are doing.

So we are going to try to find a way to keep this panel going, including the staff without which we would not have done anything of what we have done so far. And I want you to know that insofar as this Committee or you individually become champions of the report, we want to be in a position, and we feel reasonably confident we will be, to back you up, to support you because we think it is that important. Again, thank you very much for your time and your interest.

Chairman JOHNSON. Senator Carper.

Senator CARPER. There had been a former Governor of Delaware named Russell Peterson and a former President of the University of Delaware named Art Trabant who came to see me, I think in 1993, 1994, my first year as Governor. And they had a proposal that they delivered to me on how to transform the area along the industrial wasteland along the Christina River where the train station is in Wilmington right along I-95 where a baseball stadium is.

And they had the incredible vision of what we could do with that land where 10,000 people once worked to build ships that helped win World War II. The war was over, decayed, industrial wasteland followed in its wake. And they represented a wonderful vision and I said to them at the meeting, I said, Who is going to do this? Who is going to lead this effort?

And former Governor Peterson, who was by then about 80, he said to me, he said, You are. And I said, Why me? And he said, Because you are a Governor and that is what Governors do. And that is what we have done and it is just wonderful. Sometime I hope you can come and visit. It is on the riverfront. I think Governor Ridge has maybe been there once or twice.

But I am really encouraged by what you said. If the Chairman and I are as persuasive as we are, go meet with the Vice President next week and say, We had a hearing, this is a great idea, tell him who presented it to us and all, I am not sure we are going to be as effective as we might be if we did not do it with you, maybe the four of us to sit down with the Vice President and say, This is something we think is important and we just think it is something

you ought to consider adding in your last 15—14 months, really, as Vice President to your portfolio. What do you think?

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well, that would be great. We would be there, sure.

Senator CARPER. Good. Thank you.

Chairman JOHNSON. I would be happy to participate. By the way, that story was almost related.

Senator CARPER. I am getting better. He got a better overtime, why should I not?

Chairman JOHNSON. Let us face it. The Blue Ribbon Panel found two fabulous champions, Governor Ridge, Senator Lieberman, you are true patriots. You served your Nation, you are continuing to serve it. We want to work with you. I look at this as a great blueprint. Like I said, take comfort from the fact that I have already gone down that list of hearings. Again, a blueprint. We are going to want to follow that, we went to work with you on this.

These threats are real. One thing I have noticed about Washington D.C. is there is an awful lot of reality denying going on around here and I am not into reality denying. If we are going to solve problems, the first step is you have to acknowledge—in reality you have to admit you have that problem. You guys certainly together put together this Blue Ribbon Panel that describes a reality that we have to face. So I really do appreciate it.

I think the technique we have been trying to follow, and this is what happened with cyber security, too, it is amazing what you can accomplish when you really do not care who gets credit for it. We had the CISA bill out of the Intel Committee. We could have claimed jurisdiction; we did not. We said that is a good bill. We worked together on the Federal Cyber Security Enhancement Act. We got that put in the manager's amendment.

So when you concentrate on the areas of agreement that unify us and unite us, you can actually accomplish something, rather than trying to exploit our divisions. So this surely should be an area that unifies us because we agree this is a problem that needs to be addressed. We want to work with you over the coming months, possibly years, to really address this very real threat.

So again, thank you for your service and you can be assured that we will work with you in the future on this.

Senator LIEBERMAN. That is great.

Governor Ridge. Thank you.

Chairman JOHNSON. With that, the hearing record will remain open for another 15 days until November 12 5 p.m. for the submission of statements and questions for the record. This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, the Committee was adjourned at 4:12 p.m.]

A P P E N D I X

Opening Statement of Chairman Ron Johnson
“Assessing the State of Our Nation’s Biodefense”

Wednesday, October 28, 2015

As submitted for the record:

Discussions about homeland security often involve the threats we can see: violent extremism, dirty bombs, explosives, nuclear weapons, etc. Today, we will be examining our nation’s defenses and preparedness for a threat that is not visible to the naked eye but that can threaten entire cities: biological agents such as the bacteria and viruses that cause anthrax, plague, tularemia and Ebola.

These pathogens are familiar to most of us. They, among others, have all previously been identified by the Department of Homeland Security as posing serious threats to our national security. They could potentially cause the deaths of tens of thousands of Americans if used as weapons. And these pathogens could be delivered in any number of frightening scenarios — some known and some unknown.

The impact could be widespread, and attacks could go on for days before the medical community notices. After authorities conclude an attack has taken place, stopping the perpetrators is no small task and one to which we are unaccustomed. Consider that in the case of the anthrax mailings of 2001, it took six years for the FBI to identify their chief suspect.

The natural threat from Mother Nature is equally unnerving. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation modeled what would happen today if influenza similar to the 1918 Spanish flu were to break out today. The global result: 33 million people could die within 250 days.

Last year, the Ebola outbreak tested our nation’s readiness to handle such threats. What started as a confident response quickly became shaky as several health care workers themselves became infected. Instead of patients being treated at any community hospital, they were transferred to just a handful of specialized facilities. Federal agencies were caught off-guard on medical countermeasure development, clinical guidelines, waste management and overall leadership.

We need to ask important questions: Are we ready for another natural infectious disease outbreak? Are federal agencies, together with state and local partners, ready to respond to a biological attack, the source of which may remain unknown for months or years? In a period of significant fiscal limitations, are funds being allocated most efficiently and effectively?

Whether the threat is an intentional weapon or an emerging infectious disease, our nation’s biodefense infrastructure needs to be effective from detection to attribution to recovery. Though we arguably have the greatest health care system in the world, we do not want to be overly confident about our ability to respond to these biological challenges. We need an adequate strategy and leadership to see it implemented.

I want to thank former Sen. Joe Lieberman and former Gov. Tom Ridge for joining us today. Sen. Lieberman and Gov. Ridge have co-chaired the Blue Ribbon Panel on Biodefense, which has been examining our biodefense infrastructure since last December. Their report, published today, is a testament to the hard work they and their staff have put into this important project. I look forward to their testimony.

Statement of Ranking Member Tom Carper
“Assessing the State of Our Nation’s Biodefense”

Wednesday, October 28, 2015

As prepared for delivery:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing on the state of our nation’s biodefense. I’m delighted to welcome two of my former colleagues—Joe Lieberman and Tom Ridge. They have been – and remain – two of my very favorite people in the world, and here they are side by side! My heartfelt thanks to both of you for being here and for your extraordinary and continued service to our country on the issue we’ll be discussing today and on many others, as well.

In recent years, public officials and academic experts alike have sounded the alarm about our ability to deal effectively with biological threats. Since 2000, several commissions, including the 9/11 Commission, have affirmed the danger that the release of a biological agent poses to all of us. In doing so, they’ve urged us to devote more attention and resources to detecting, preventing, and responding to such an incident.

Our experience with Ebola over the last year serves as a fresh reminder that biological threats are real. Over 11,000 people world-wide lost their lives in this recent Ebola outbreak and a number of Americans were infected with the disease. The spread of this disease—as well as the public alarm over the epidemic—demonstrate the importance of having the appropriate policies, public engagement plans, and resources in place ahead of time.

It’s important to remember, too, that biological threats don’t just have an adverse impact on our health and our homeland security. They can also dramatically impact our economy. As some of us will recall, just a few months ago, parts of our country struggled with an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian flu.

Though harmless to people so far, the virus devastated some parts of the poultry industry, leading to higher egg prices and the closure of some foreign markets for U.S. poultry products, thus adversely impacting businesses large and small.

Further complicating matters, there have also been a number of troubling incidents over the past year at federal and non-governmental labs that research infectious diseases.

The reports of deadly pathogens being mishandled or misplaced is concerning and underscores the need for more rigorous oversight both here and in the Administration.

“In the midst of these developments, a number of very smart people came together and began examining how the federal government – in conjunction with state, local, and non-governmental entities – was doing at preventing and combating potential biological hazards.

Since last year, the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense – led by our two very able friends we have before us today – has convened several public meetings and consulted with a number of

experts. Their goal was simple – offer recommendations on how to improve our efforts and address capability gaps that had previously been overlooked.

That review, released earlier this morning, contains a number of valuable recommendations that could significantly improve our biosecurity efforts. I urge the Administration and our colleagues in Congress to give these recommendations the attention they deserve and, then, take action.

I look forward to discussing the Panel's findings today. I'm confident that our witnesses can help Congress identify any number of common sense improvements to our nation's biodefense systems that could be enacted with bipartisan support.

My thanks again to Senator Lieberman and Governor Ridge for being here today to discuss their work and that of the team they led. I look forward to a productive hearing – and knowing these two gentlemen well – an enjoyable one, too! To paraphrase one of our former commanders-in-chief, 'Bring it on!'

**Full Committee Hearing of the
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**

Assessing the State of Our Nation's Biodefense

October 28, 2015

Statement for the Record
The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman
The Honorable Thomas J. Ridge

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Carper, and Members of the Committee: Thank you for inviting us here to provide the perspective and recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense. On behalf of our colleagues on the Panel – former Secretary Donna Shalala, former Majority Leader Tom Daschle, former Representative Jim Greenwood, and former Homeland Security Advisor Ken Wainstein – we present the findings, concerns, and determined optimism of our group.

As you know, we both have addressed homeland security in various capacities for many years. Senator Lieberman served 24 years in the United States Senate, where he spent six years as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Governor Ridge was the nation's first Secretary of Homeland Security and served six terms in the United States House of Representatives. Although we have left government, we remain committed to public service and concerned about challenges to the homeland.

We are particularly concerned about the biological threat. We did not pick up this mantle lightly – we knew the problems were great. We also understood that the federal government and its many partners began laying a foundation for biodefense before and particularly after the anthrax attacks of 2001 (fourteen years ago this month). Many in Congress well remember the events that autumn. Just a few feet away, in the Hart Senate Office Building, events unfolded that would permanently alter the trajectory of U.S. biodefense. Letters laden with anthrax spores caused the shutdown of that building for three months. Additional letters wreaked havoc in other locations up and down the East Coast. This led, of course, to far more than reduced business productivity and extreme financial costs for the nation – five Americans died and 17 more were sickened with anthrax.

We are hardly the first to come to you with concerns that the United States is not taking the biological threat seriously enough and that as a result, it is not ready to deal with a biological event. The U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century raised the issue fourteen years ago, the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States raised it eleven years ago, the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction raised it ten years ago, and the Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism (WMD Commission) raised it seven years ago.

In December 2008, Senators Bob Graham and Jim Talent sat at this very table to present the findings of the WMD Commission. Their assessment was sobering: they believed that more likely than not, terrorists would use a weapon of mass destruction in a terrorist attack by the end of 2013. Sadly, they were correct: Bashar al-Assad deployed chemical weapons on the Syrian people in 2013. We can only assume that their grave concerns regarding the biological threat were well founded and could come to fruition.

We began our work with the Panel with two questions in mind: (1) is the United States still vulnerable to the same weaknesses in biodefense that Senators Graham and Talent found in 2008; and (2) what are we doing to heed their advice – and that of the esteemed panels before them – to take decisive action to strengthen our national biodefense?

After a year's work to investigate these questions, we offer our findings in our bipartisan report, "A National Blueprint for Biodefense: Major Reform Needed to Optimize Efforts." This report is the culmination of our efforts to examine the national state of defense against intentionally introduced, accidentally released, and naturally occurring biological threats. We invited more than sixty experts to speak with us in public meetings. These included current and former lawmakers and federal officials, local health department representatives, emergency service providers, academicians, business leaders, and thought leaders. With their input and significant additional research as outlined in the report's Methodology section, we scrutinized the status of prevention, deterrence, preparedness, detection, response, attribution, recovery, and mitigation – the spectrum of activities deemed necessary for biodefense by both Republican and Democratic administrations, and many policy experts.

First, our findings. We identified substantial achievements in our capacity to defend against major biological events, but also found serious gaps that continue to leave the homeland vulnerable. The more catastrophic the potential consequences, the less prepared we are. We believe that this vulnerability is rooted in the lack of strong centralized leadership at the highest level of government. No single individual is imbued with the charge and authority to create a cohesive, effective, and efficient whole of the dozen responsible departments and agencies responsible for some aspect of biodefense. The last three Presidential Administrations have taken a variety of leadership approaches to address the issue, usually involving a Special Assistant or Czar at the White House. The roles were important and the individuals holding them achieved significant accomplishments. Unfortunately, the fundamental jurisdictional and budgetary authorities necessary to drive all elements of public and private sector efforts eluded them all.

The WMD Commission was similarly concerned about the lack of high-level leadership and the governance structure at the White House. Because this not been resolved, any Commission recommendations implemented suffered from the absence of guidance and accountability that centralized leadership provides. This includes a review of the Select Agent Program, strengthening global disease surveillance, and enhancing the nation's capabilities for rapid response – which recent events demonstrate are all still not functioning adequately.

It has been said that many issues are critically important, complicated, and require a centrally led whole-of-nation effort. A suite of issues from cyber attacks to violent extremism threatens our security. We asked ourselves if this meant that biodefense was no more in need of centralized

leadership than other initiatives. What we came to believe was that biodefense is, in fact, unique. As a component of national defense, the responsibility for biodefense falls squarely within the purview of the federal government as one of its most important functions. Biodefense also touches many aspects of society, from national security, to homeland security, to public health security, to economic security. It requires a highly complex and sophisticated enterprise approach. It requires the clean alignment of more than a dozen departments and agencies working in tandem toward a common endpoint, with no confusion over intermediate or end goals and without duplicative expenditures we cannot afford in this time of fiscal constraint. This harmonization and prioritization can only occur in the presence of a driving force with policy, political, and budget authority sufficient to achieve what has never been achieved before.

We identified three primary symptoms that result from this lack of centralized leadership: insufficient coordination, collaboration, and innovation. Though well-intentioned departments and agencies have tried to coordinate some aspects of biodefense among themselves, the fact is that their efforts fall short. Overarching leadership is necessary to direct and harmonize these efforts. A leader at the White House must set priorities, goals, and objectives for biodefense, and hold members of the Executive Branch accountable for meeting them.

Additionally, because of the substantial participation required by non-federal partners, such a leader must take charge of intergovernmental collaborative efforts. It is state, local, territorial, and tribal governments, and their non-governmental partners, who will feel and respond to the immediate impact of biological events. The federal government must aid in strengthening their capabilities and increasing the support and access provided to them far beyond current levels – and someone needs to make this a priority.

Finally, biodefense efforts urgently call for a much greater focus on innovation – because biological threats are imminent, biological vulnerabilities have existed for too long, and the complexity of the threat requires equally complex solutions. The government tends toward risk aversion, which is reasonable in certain fora – but in biodefense, it will only result in failure to foster the entrepreneurial thinking and technological solutions we need to develop radical, effective solutions.

These symptoms are not abstract: they have very real-world implications for the security of the American people. If rectified, for example, hospitals would have the guidance they need to handle diseases like Ebola, city governments would have the support they need to dispense medical countermeasures to the masses, and industry would have the incentives and direction it needs to solve our greatest challenges in biodetection.

Next, our recommendations. Our report contains 33 recommendations, each of which we believe can individually improve our Nation's ability to prevent, deter, prepare for, detect, respond to, attribute, recover from, or mitigate biological events. We also provide about 100 short-, medium-, and long-term programmatic, legislative, and policy actions. Collectively, they serve as a blueprint for biodefense. We highlight here the most important recommendations:

1. **Leadership:** First and foremost, we must instate a leader at the highest level of government who recognizes the severity of the biological threat and possesses the authority and political will to defend against it. We recommend that this top-level leader be the Vice President of the United States. The Vice President has a direct line to the President and, when imbued with authority as the President's proxy, can act on his or her behalf. The primary goal of centralizing leadership is to place coordination and oversight responsibility in a location that will have sufficient jurisdictional and budget authority regardless of personalities or party in power, and with a person in a position with the ability to make executive decisions. The Vice President possesses these attributes. The Vice President should also establish and lead a Biodefense Coordination Council to aid in driving a coalition toward solutions.
2. **Biodefense Strategy:** The nature of those solutions will be dependent on a well-considered comprehensive strategy. The Vice President's top priority must be development of the National Biodefense Strategy of the United States of America. This strategy should be all-inclusive and harmonized, and should define all Executive Branch organizational structures and requirements, modernization and realignment plans, and resource requirements necessary for implementation. The White House staff must collate existing strategies and plans, identify requirements within extant policies, and assess spending history and value. They can then draft a comprehensive strategy, and policymakers can assess where we are falling short of meeting the strategic approach outlined therein. That will allow the President and the Congress to determine where to allocate resources. We strongly recommend that the President implement a unified biodefense budget to do this.
3. **Biosurveillance:** One of the most important actions we can take to protect ourselves is to improve our capacity for rapid detection of dispersed or circulating biological agents. Early detection has been the goal of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) biodefense efforts since the Department was established. From the fielding of BioWatch detection machines in high-risk jurisdictions around the country, to the collection and integration of biosurveillance data by the National Biosurveillance Integration System, some limited progress has been made. But we are still incapable of truly rapid detection. We have two choices: either we make existing biodetection and biosurveillance programs work, or we replace them with solutions that do. Many departments and agencies must coordinate with DHS on detection and biosurveillance, and we believe that this will only happen if someone at the White House is forcing the issue.
4. **Medical Countermeasures (MCM):** Senator Talent told us that policymakers should prioritize the development of MCM because we know that success is achievable in this specific area. The technological and resource challenges to taking threats off the table with MCM are tough, but surmountable. Innovative ideas within industry abound. We must reduce bureaucratic hurdles at the Department of Health and Human Services and increase efforts to incentivize and fund what is still a nascent MCM industry. This includes simple steps like returning contracting authority to the Director of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority and convening industry partners to help determine which incentives will work for them and how.

5. **One Health:** One Health is the glue that will hold all of these efforts together. None of the efforts we described will have comprehensive impact without considering animal health and environmental health as equal to human health. The vast majority of emerging infectious disease threats faced by humans, and the pathogens the intelligence community is most concerned about terrorists acquiring, are zoonotic. They interact with their environments and move between animals and people. Ebola, for example, came to humans through animals. And avian influenza spread from wild birds through their environment to reach farm animals. We were not and still are not prepared to deal with this. We must prioritize, properly guide and fund, and fully integrate Department of Agriculture and Department of the Interior animal infectious disease surveillance, as well as state, local, territorial, and tribal planning and surveillance for zoonoses, into all biodefense efforts.

This short list does not diminish the importance of every other recommendation in our report. We submit that all thirty-three recommendations are necessary to advance our status as a prepared nation. Enhanced intelligence collection, protection of pathogen data and cybersecurity, overhaul of the Select Agent Program, support of hospital preparedness and public health preparedness grants, and U.S.-led international efforts in public health response and biological weapons diplomacy will lead us to a position of much greater strength – if executed efficiently, effectively, and in concert.

Last but not least, the role of Congress in conducting oversight and providing authorities regarding all of these recommendations cannot be overstated. Our report provides a number of recommendations to amend legislation and coordinate congressional oversight. It also provides an extensive list of suggested topics in need of oversight that we hope you and your colleagues on other committees and in the House will consider.

As we close, we ask you to keep in mind the concerns of our citizenry. They were far from apathetic when Ebola came to the United States and claimed lives here and abroad. Thousands are becoming sick and dying of Chikungunya, a disease for which – like Ebola – we do not have a cure. They were aghast to see chemical weapons used in the Middle East by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant earlier this year, especially given the proximity of our troops. They watch television shows and movies featuring diseases and their devastating effects on society. They are close to this issue and want us to do something about it, before biological weapons, accidental releases from laboratories, or new diseases kill their neighbors, their friends, or their families. It is too late to get ahead of this threat – it is already out there. But we can get ahead of its impact.

Once again, we thank you for this opportunity to hear our perspective. We would also like to thank Hudson Institute and the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies at Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, our institutional sponsors, and all of the organizations that supported our efforts financially and otherwise. We look forward to working with you to strengthen national biodefense.

Please see our bipartisan report, “A National Blueprint for Biodefense: Major Reform Needed to Optimize Efforts” for our 33 recommendations and associated action items.

Recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Study Panel for Biodefense:

1. Institutionalize biodefense in the Office of the Vice President of the United States.
2. Establish a Biodefense Coordination Council at the White House, led by the Vice President.
3. Develop, implement, and update a comprehensive national biodefense strategy.
4. Unify biodefense budgeting.
5. Determine and establish a clear congressional agenda to ensure national biodefense.
6. Improve management of the biological intelligence enterprise.
7. Integrate animal health and One Health approaches into biodefense strategies.
8. Prioritize and align investments in medical countermeasures among all federal stakeholders.
9. Better support and inform decisions based on biological attribution.
10. Establish a national environmental decontamination and remediation capacity.
11. Implement an integrated national biosurveillance capability.
12. Empower non-federal entities to be equal biosurveillance partners.
13. Optimize the National Biosurveillance Integration System.
14. Improve surveillance of and planning for animal and zoonotic outbreaks.
15. Provide emergency service providers with the resources they need to keep themselves and their families safe.
16. Redouble efforts to share information with state, local, territorial, and tribal partners.
17. Fund the Public Health Emergency Preparedness cooperative agreement at no less than authorized levels.
18. Establish and utilize a standard process to develop and issue clinical infection control guidance for biological events.
19. Minimize redirection of Hospital Preparedness Program funds.
20. Provide the financial incentives hospitals need to prepare for biological events.
21. Establish a biodefense hospital system.
22. Develop and implement a Medical Countermeasure Response Framework.
23. Allow for forward deployment of Strategic National Stockpile assets.
24. Harden pathogen and advanced biotechnology information from cyber attacks.
25. Renew U.S. leadership of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.
26. Implement military-civilian collaboration for biodefense.
27. Prioritize innovation over incrementalism in medical countermeasure development.
28. Fully prioritize, fund, and incentivize the medical countermeasure enterprise.
29. Reform Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority contracting.
30. Incentivize development of rapid point-of-care diagnostics.
31. Develop a 21st Century-worthy environmental detection system.
32. Review and overhaul the Select Agent Program.
33. Lead the way toward establishing a functional and agile global public health response apparatus.

A NATIONAL BLUEPRINT FOR BIODEFENSE: LEADERSHIP AND MAJOR REFORM NEEDED TO OPTIMIZE EFFORTS

BIPARTISAN REPORT OF THE BLUE RIBBON STUDY PANEL ON BIODEFENSE

BACKGROUND

The Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense was established in 2014 to assess gaps and provide recommendations to improve U.S. biodefense. The Panel determined where the United States is falling short of addressing biological attacks and emerging and reemerging infectious diseases. Individuals from all levels of government, industry, academia, and advocacy provided their perspectives at a series of four day-long meetings with the Panel.

THE CHALLENGE OF LEADERSHIP

Simply put, the Nation does not afford the biological threat the same level of attention as it does other threats: There is no centralized leader for biodefense. There is no comprehensive national strategic plan for biodefense. There is no all-inclusive dedicated budget for biodefense. The Nation lacks a single leader to control, prioritize, coordinate, and hold agencies accountable for working toward common national biodefense. This weakness precludes sufficient defense against biological threats.

► THE NEED FOR LEADERSHIP TO ELEVATE COORDINATION

Inter-governmental and multi-disciplinary efforts are needed to adequately defend the Nation against biological threats. Centralized, effective leadership is necessary to direct and harmonize these efforts, but because this is lacking, biodefense activities are insufficiently coordinated. This problem can largely be resolved through the leadership of the Vice President and the establishment of a White House Biodefense Coordination Council.

► THE NEED FOR LEADERSHIP TO ELEVATE COLLABORATION

U.S. biodefense is not, nor should it be, a solely federal function. The impact of biological events, while felt nationally, will be addressed locally. The federal government must aid in strengthening state, local, territorial, and tribal biodefense capabilities and increase the support and access provided to them far beyond current levels.

► THE NEED FOR LEADERSHIP TO DRIVE INNOVATION

The innovative process of scientific discovery is inherently fraught with uncertainty. Yet biodefense efforts urgently call for a much greater focus on innovation than ever before – because biological threats are imminent, biological vulnerabilities have existed for too long, and the complexity of the threat requires equally complex solutions. Biodefense also requires sustained prioritization and funding to ensure that success realized thus far is maintained, and that opportunity and innovation are pursued.

CONCLUSIONS

We have reached a critical mass of biological crises. Myriad biological threats, vulnerabilities, and consequences have collectively and dramatically increased the risk to the Nation. They have also, we believe, garnered the attention of enough people who understand the threat is real, want to mobilize and take action, and can provide for effective national biodefense. Leadership moves America forward. Dramatic improvements are within our reach if we follow a national blueprint for biodefense, establish leadership, and engage in major reform efforts that build on the good work that is already in place, and innovates where it is not.

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BLUEPRINT FOR BIODEFENSE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Institutionalize biodefense in the Office of the Vice President of the United States.
2. Establish a Biodefense Coordination Council at the White House, led by the Vice President.
3. Develop, implement, and update a comprehensive national biodefense strategy.
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5. Determine and establish a clear congressional agenda to ensure national biodefense.
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31. Develop a 21st Century-worthy environmental detection system.
32. Review and overhaul the Select Agent Program.
33. Lead the way toward establishing a functional and agile global public health response apparatus.

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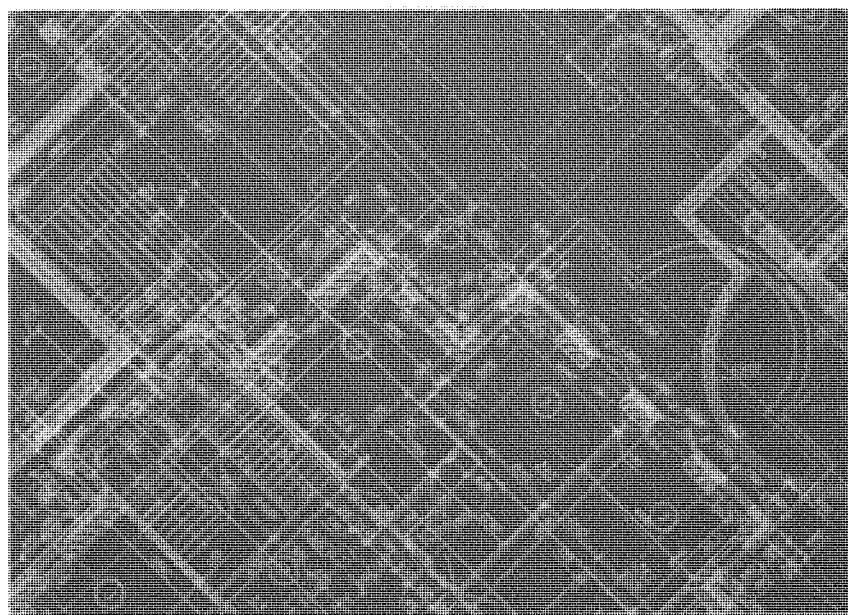
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A NATIONAL BLUEPRINT FOR BIODEFENSE:

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
STRATEGIC OUTLINES

BIPARTISAN REPORT OF THE BLUE RIBBON
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October 2005



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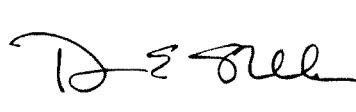
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Thomas J. Ridge, Chair



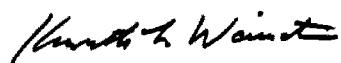
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PREFACE

October 28, 2015

To the President, Congress, and the American People:

The United States is underprepared for biological threats. Nation states and unaffiliated terrorists (via biological terrorism) and nature itself (via emerging and reemerging infectious diseases) threaten us. While biological events may be inevitable, their level of impact on our country is not.

We convened the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense to assess how much has been done to address the biological threat and what remains undone. Despite significant progress on several fronts, the Nation is dangerously vulnerable to a biological event. The root cause of this continuing vulnerability is the lack of strong centralized leadership at the highest level of government.

Crisis after biological crisis has forced the United States to act. Naturally occurring threats such as influenza, Ebola, and Chikungunya are bypassing borders to emerge in nations oceans away, and exact a continued toll. The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (also known as ISIL and Da'esh) is devastating the Middle East while espousing the value of biological weapons for their ability to cause massive loss of life. The U.S. government has mishandled extremely dangerous viruses and bacteria in some of its highest level laboratories. The Nation lacks the leadership, coordination, collaboration, and innovation necessary to respond.

This Panel (through public meetings, targeted interviews, and extensive research) examined the national state of defense against biological attacks and emerging and reemerging infectious diseases, of the order that could cause catastrophic loss of life, societal disruption, and loss of confidence in our government. We scrutinized the status of prevention, deterrence, preparedness, detection, response, attribution, recovery, and mitigation – the spectrum of activities deemed necessary for biodefense by both Republican and Democratic Administrations, and many experts outside of government. We identified substantial achievements, but we also found serious gaps and inadequacies that continue to leave the Nation vulnerable to threats from nature and terrorists alike.

Successive Presidents, beginning with William J. Clinton and followed by George W. Bush and Barack H. Obama, enacted policies intended to strengthen national biodefense. As a result, many federal departments and agencies took action and the majority of these programs received bipartisan congressional support. Yet fourteen years after the last report of the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, eleven years after the report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, ten years after the report of the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, and seven years since the report of the Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism, the insufficiency of our myriad and fragmented biodefense activities persists because biodefense lacks focused leadership. Capable individuals oversee elements at the department and agency levels, but no steward guides them collectively.

As leaders in past Administrations and Congresses, we, the members of the Panel, had a role in our national biodefense and we share responsibility for its shortcomings. Our intent is to help remedy the correctable shortfalls by identifying specific short-, medium-, and long-term programmatic, legislative, and policy actions in this report. We urge those in leadership positions to implement our recommendations with utmost haste. Lives are in the balance.

We provided this charge to ourselves – without a commission from Congress or the President – and tried not to duplicate the work of previously mandated commissions and appointed panels. Instead, we built on and contemporized their insights, observations, and recommendations. While we originally intended to assess both biological and chemical threats, we came to believe that the more immediate concern regarding loss of life is the biological threat and that in focusing on it, there will be collateral benefits for dealing with the chemical threat as well.

Biodefense touches many aspects of society, falling within the purview of national security, homeland security, public health security, and economic security. As such, it requires an enterprise approach – eliminating stovepipes; transcending agency-centric activity; drawing upon stakeholders throughout government, academia, and the private sector; and recognizing the extraordinary breadth of the challenge – to provide flexible solutions that address the full spectrum of the threat. Most importantly, the Nation needs an overarching leader who recognizes the severity of the biological threat and possesses the authority and political will to defend against it. This top-level leader, together with leaders throughout the enterprise, must guide efforts and ensure that the combined impact of biological threats, vulnerabilities, and consequences are managed using a common biodefense strategy.

As former Secretary of the Navy Richard Danzig told us, “We don’t really get to choose what we have to prepare for.” We have no choice – the Nation must take action to defend against the biological threat. We have done much already, but we need the leadership only a top-level official can bring to bear to optimize the biodefense enterprise. We believe that our recommendations will make America more secure, and we will continue to monitor actions taken to improve our national biodefense posture. If you take and demand action now, you can save lives. There is no greater calling or responsibility.



Joseph I. Lieberman
CHAIR



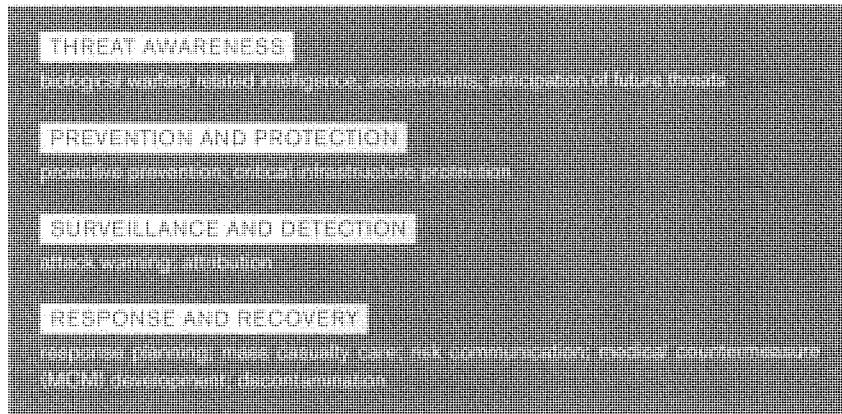
Thomas J. Ridge
CHAIR

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense was established in 2014 to assess gaps and provide recommendations to improve U.S. biodefense. The Panel – supported by a suite of distinguished ex officio members and staff with deep expertise in science, policy, intelligence, and defense; institutional hosting through Hudson Institute and the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies at Potomac Institute for Policy Studies; and funds from academia, foundations, and industry – determined where the United States is falling short of addressing biological attacks and emerging and reemerging infectious diseases.

Individuals from all levels of government, industry, academia, and advocacy provided their perspectives at a series of four day-long meetings with the Study Panel. They addressed the pillars of biodefense outlined in Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 10:



REPORT ORGANIZATION

The Nation has made some progress with biodefense and this report does not dismiss this. Rather than catalog success, however, this report delineates areas needing improvement and provides key recommendations to address them. Although challenges undoubtedly exist in all of the capability areas needed for biodefense, this report describes that subset brought to the Panel's attention as being the most problematic. It also pushes beyond the limits of HSPD-10 to urge greater inclusion of issues like animal health and global engagement as key components of the biodefense mission. This report contains proposals for an effective leadership construct and a renewed governance structure. It provides a detailed blueprint for reform with action items that are categorized by time to completion (summarized in Table 1): short-term (in one year or less); medium-term (within one to three years); and long-term (within three to five years).

THE CHALLENGE OF LEADERSHIP

Simply put, the Nation does not afford the biological threat the same level of attention as it does other threats: There is no centralized leader for biodefense. There is no comprehensive national strategic plan for biodefense. There is no all-inclusive dedicated budget for biodefense.

The Nation lacks a single leader to control, prioritize, coordinate, and hold agencies accountable for working toward common national biodefense. This weakness precludes sufficient defense against biological threats. A leader must, therefore, take charge of our Nation's response to biological crises, as well as day-to-day activities in the absence of such crises.

Leadership of biodefense should be institutionalized at the White House with the Vice President. This office alone can be imbued with the authority of the President to coordinate agencies, budgets, and strategies across the government in a way that no other position can.

THE NEED FOR LEADERSHIP TO ACHIEVE COORDINATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Inter-governmental and multi-disciplinary efforts are needed to adequately defend the Nation against biological threats. Centralized, effective leadership is necessary to direct and harmonize these efforts, but because this is lacking, biodefense activities are insufficiently coordinated. This problem can largely be resolved through the leadership of the Vice President and the establishment of a White House Biodefense Coordination Council.

The coordination problem is exacerbated by the lack of a comprehensive biodefense strategy and a unified approach to budgeting, both vital to any strategic interagency effort. Congressional oversight efforts are hampered by the lack of these important components, insufficient awareness of the threat, and inadequate oversight among committees. These challenges could be alleviated in part through regular and in-depth intelligence briefings for Members of Congress, and implementation of joint congressional oversight agendas.

The lack of coordination at the highest levels impacts a variety of downstream areas of critical importance, including: intelligence activities; full consideration of the interrelationships among animal, environmental, and human health; coordination of MCM development; attribution of bioterrorist acts; and environmental decontamination and remediation. These critical areas demand better integration and clear prioritization, aligned with funding and investment, in order to inform stakeholders across the biodefense spectrum and enable them to execute a strategy once it is developed.

THE NEED FOR LEADERSHIP TO ELEVATE COLLABORATION

U.S. biodefense is not, nor should it be, a solely federal function. The impact of biological events, while felt nationally, will be addressed locally. The federal government must aid in strengthening state, local, territorial, and tribal biodefense capabilities and increase the support and access provided to them far beyond current levels.

Rapid and accurate identification of a pathogen moving through humans, animals, or the environment is absolutely necessary, yet significant advances in such identification remain elusive. The federal government must implement a nationally integrated biosurveillance capability, dramatically improve environmental biosurveillance, and substantially augment collection and incorporation of animal data into human biosurveillance systems.

The Nation must also demonstrate support for emergency services through improved training, enhanced personal protection, and better intelligence sharing. We must commit reasonable

and sustained levels of financial support to state, local, territorial, and tribal health departments. The federal government must also increase support to hospitals, through tighter management of Hospital Preparedness Program funds, development of Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services incentives, and accreditation of select hospitals as biodefense specialty centers.

Public-private partnerships are fundamental to any efforts toward development, distribution, and dispensing of MCM. We must produce a MCM response framework that is predicated on non-federal input, collaboration, and implementation, and that allows for pre-deployment of stockpiles. Finally, the federal government must lead efforts to secure vulnerable pathogen data.

THE NEED FOR LEADERSHIP TO DRIVE INNOVATION

The innovative process of scientific discovery is inherently fraught with uncertainty. Yet biodefense efforts urgently call for a much greater focus on innovation than ever before – because biological threats are imminent, biological vulnerabilities have existed for too long, and the complexity of the threat requires equally complex solutions. Biodefense also requires sustained prioritization and funding to ensure that success realized thus far is maintained, and that opportunity and innovation are pursued.

We must revolutionize the development of MCM for emerging infectious diseases, fully fund and incentivize the MCM enterprise, and remove bureaucratic hurdles to MCM innovation. We must develop a system for environmental detection that leverages the ingenuity of industry and meets the growing threat. We must overhaul the Select Agent Program to enable a secure system that simultaneously encourages participation by the scientific community. Finally, we must help lead the international community toward the establishment of a fully functional and agile global public health response apparatus.

CONCLUSIONS

We have reached a critical mass of biological crises. Myriad biological threats, vulnerabilities, and consequences have collectively and dramatically increased the risk to the Nation. They have also, we believe, garnered the attention of enough people who understand the threat is real, want to mobilize and take action, and can provide for effective national biodefense.

Leadership moves America forward. A central and authoritative leader – who, by recommendation of this report, is the Vice President – can foster substantial progress in biodefense, much of it in the near term. Once installed as this leader, the Vice President (and the interagency team of experts who will work to realize the strategic vision of the Executive and Legislative Branches) can foster substantial progress, much of it in the near term. This is especially true for coordinating federal activities, forging intersectoral partnerships, and revolutionizing the ways in which we approach this mission space.

Dramatic improvements are within our reach if we follow a national blueprint for biodefense, establish leadership, and engage in major reform efforts that build on the good work that is already in place.

TABLE 1: RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

Recommendation	Action Item	Term to Execute		
		Short	Medium	Long
1	Institutionalize biodefense in the Office of the Vice President of the United States.			
	a Empower the Vice President with jurisdiction and authority.	•		
	b Empower the Vice President with budget authority.	•		
2	Establish a Biodefense Coordination Council at the White House, led by the Vice President.			
	a Require broad federal participation.	•		
	b Invite broad non-federal stakeholder participation.	•		
	c Structure the Council for consensus and accountability.	•		
3	Develop, implement, and update a comprehensive national biodefense strategy.			
	a Collate the whole of biodefense policy.	•		
	b Identify requirements within all extant policies.	•		
	c Assess spending history and value.	•		
	d Produce the National Biodefense Strategy of the United States of America and its Implementation Plan.	•		
	e Develop a gap analysis based on this comprehensive strategy.	•		
	f Institute a major quadrennial biodefense review.	•		
4	Unify biodefense budgeting.			
	a Develop and execute a mandatory annual biodefense call for data.	•		
	b Conduct a cross-cutting biodefense budget analysis.	•		
	c Align budget items to the National Biodefense Strategy of the United States of America.	•		
	d Provide predictable and multi-year funding for all biodefense programs.	•		
5	Determine and establish a clear congressional agenda to ensure national biodefense.			
	a Develop joint congressional oversight agendas.	•		
6	Improve management of the biological intelligence enterprise.			
	a Create a National Intelligence Manager for Biological Threats.	•		
	b Make biological weapons programs and related activities a discrete intelligence topic.	•		
	c Address bystanders.	•		
	d Distribute assessments.	•		

Recommendation	Term to Execute
Action Item	Short Medium Long
7 Integrate animal health and One Health approaches into biodefense strategies.	
a Institutionalize One Health.	
b Develop a nationally notifiable animal disease system.	
c Prioritize emerging and reemerging infectious diseases.	
8 Prioritize and align investments in medical countermeasures among all federal stakeholders.	
a Ensure National Institutes of Health research supports civilian medical countermeasure priorities.	
b Ensure funding allocations are appropriate to meet the need.	
c Require a biodefense spend plan from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.	
9 Better support and inform decisions based on biological attribution.	
a Establish a national biological attribution decision-making apparatus.	
b Place the Federal Bureau of Investigation in charge of the National Bioforensics Analysis Center.	
10 Establish a national environmental decontamination and remediation capacity.	
a Include the Federal Emergency Management Agency in efforts to address remediation.	
b Assign responsibility to the Environmental Protection Agency for environmental decontamination and remediation.	
c Conduct studies of those exposed to disease-causing agents.	
11 Implement an integrated national biosurveillance capability.	
a Implement the National Strategy for Biosurveillance.	
12 Empower non-federal entities to be equal biosurveillance partners.	
a Create an interagency biosurveillance planning committee.	
13 Optimize the National Biosurveillance Integration System.	
a Assess the viability of the National Biosurveillance Integration System as the prime integrator of biosurveillance information.	
b Incentivize data sharing.	
14 Improve surveillance of and planning for animal and zoonotic outbreaks.	
a Increase opportunities for animal health data collection.	
b Fund the National Animal Health Laboratory Network at a level that allows it to achieve success.	
c Develop guidance for the serious implications of companion animal and wildlife zoonoses.	

Recommendation	Term to Execute
Action Item	
15 Provide emergency service providers with the resources they need to keep themselves and their families safe.	
a Provide vaccines to responders who request them. b Provide medkits to emergency service providers and their families. c Establish reasonable personal protective equipment guidelines and requirements in advance of a biological event.	• • •
16 Redouble efforts to share information with state, local, territorial, and tribal partners.	
a Strengthen the Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team. b Strengthen the ability of local police intelligence units to address the biological threat. c Enable fusion centers to address the biological threat.	• • •
17 Fund the Public Health Emergency Preparedness cooperative agreement at no less than authorized levels.	
a Appropriate Public Health Emergency Preparedness funding to authorized levels or the President's request, whichever is higher.	•
18 Establish and utilize a standard process to develop and issue clinical infection control guidance for biological events.	
a Standardize the development of clinical infection control guidelines before biological events occur. b Institute a process for obtaining and incorporating feedback regarding clinical infection control guidelines during biological events. c Require training based on these guidelines.	• • •
19 Minimize redirection of Hospital Preparedness Program funds.	
a Cap Hospital Preparedness Program management and administration costs at three percent. b Assess the impact of the Hospital Preparedness Program.	• •
20 Provide the financial incentives hospitals need to prepare for biological events.	
a Adopt a disaster preparedness portfolio. b Link Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services incentives and reimbursement to new accreditation standards.	• •
21 Establish a biodefense hospital system.	
a Stratify hospitals. b Develop accreditation standards for each stratum. c Associate Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services funding.	• • •

Recommendation	Term to Execute
Action Item	Short Medium Long
22 Develop and implement a Medical Countermeasure Response Framework.	
a Produce a comprehensive framework to guide medical countermeasure distribution and dispensing planning.	
23 Allow for forward deployment of Strategic National Stockpile assets.	
a Determine logistics and funding needs.	
b Implement forward deployments.	
24 Harden pathogen and advanced biotechnology information from cyber attacks.	
a Develop and implement a security strategy for stored pathogen data.	
b Provide the research community with tools and incentives to secure its data.	
c Develop cyber-threat information-sharing mechanisms for the pathogen and advanced biotechnology communities.	
25 Renew U.S. leadership of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.	
a Continue to strengthen implementation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention where U.S. support is unequivocal.	
b Set U.S. goals for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and determine the conditions necessary to achieve them.	
c Develop three actionable recommendations for Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention verification.	
d Establish better biological weapons sentencing guidelines in statute.	
26 Implement military-civilian collaboration for biodefense.	
a Conduct a review of military-civilian collaborative efforts.	
b Establish military-civilian biodefense collaboration.	
c Clarify parameters for military support to civilian authorities in response to a domestic biological attack.	
d Update and implement military biodefense doctrine.	
27 Prioritize innovation over incrementalism in medical countermeasure development.	
a Prioritize innovation in medical countermeasures at agencies with biodefense responsibilities.	
b Exploit existing innovation.	
c Revolutionize development of medical countermeasures for emerging infectious diseases with pandemic potential.	
d Establish an antigen bank.	

Recommendation		Term to Execute
	Action Item	Short Medium Long
28	Fully prioritize, fund, and incentivize the medical countermeasure enterprise.	
a	Fund the medical countermeasure enterprise to no less than authorized levels.	•
b	Re-establish multi-year biodefense funding for medical countermeasure procurement.	•
c	Address prioritization and funding for influenza preparedness.	•
d	Improve the plan for incentivizing the private sector and academia.	•
29	Reform Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority contracting.	
a	Return contracting authority to the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority.	•
b	Leverage previously provided authorities.	•
c	Eliminate Office of Management and Budget review of BioShield procurements.	•
30	Incentivize development of rapid point-of-care diagnostics.	
a	Develop requirements for rapid point-of-care diagnostics for all material biological threats and emerging infectious diseases.	•
31	Develop a 21st Century-worthy environmental detection system.	
a	Fund the development of advanced environmental detection systems to replace BioWatch.	•
b	Replace BioWatch Generation 1 and 2 detectors.	•
32	Review and overhaul the Select Agent Program.	
a	Undertake a major reassessment of the Select Agent Program.	•
b	Overhaul the Select Agent Program.	•
33	Lead the way toward establishing a functional and agile global public health response apparatus.	
a	Convene human and animal health leaders.	•
b	Establish the response apparatus.	•

SCENARIO

The following hypothetical situation, told from the perspective of a congressional Committee Chairman, provides context for this report by portraying a biological attack sufficient to cause the catastrophic consequences with which this report is concerned. The scenario describes the different populations (human, animal) an agent could target and from which it could emerge, some of the key interagency capabilities required to address the agent and its impacts, and the consequences of failure in these capability areas.

SCENARIO**JOINT INQUIRY INTO ADMINISTRATION AND
CONGRESSIONAL ACTIONS BEFORE AND
AFTER THE BIOTERRORIST ATTACKS OF 2016****U.S. SENATE, SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE AND U.S.
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON
INTELLIGENCE**

I call the Joint Inquiry Committee to order. Nine weeks ago, terrorists unleashed insidious biological attacks on our Nation's Capitol during our Independence Day celebrations. The infectious agent they used ultimately led to the deaths of 6,053 Americans. Many of our own colleagues and staff fell ill and died. Thousands more were killed in coordinated attacks in allied nations in the days that followed.

The attack here in Washington, D.C. used aerosol delivery devices we could see, but did not know contained dangerous organisms. We discovered later that other attacks had already begun elsewhere in the Nation, using methods we have yet to identify that spread the disease among livestock in rural communities.

Delays in recognition – because most veterinarians and physicians had never seen Nipah virus – meant animals and people were sick for more than a week before we realized what had happened. And now we are being told that the virus, which in nature does not spread easily among people, was genetically modified to increase its ability to spread from animal to animal, animal to person, and person to person.

Biological agents have now been used again to attack the United States, defying predictions and hopes that this would never happen. Obviously, those predictions were wrong.

For years, the Intelligence Community and others said that although terrorists intended to develop and use biological weapons, they lacked the leadership, organizational wherewithal, infrastructure, expertise, and social support to actually develop and deploy them.

We were also told that there are lines beyond which even terrorists would not tread.

Despite these assurances, terrorists have now used biological weapons to conduct attacks here and throughout the world. The basis of their capability has become painfully clear: they have the leadership, numbers, funding, infrastructure, and expertise to achieve large-scale goals and objectives.

Their multipronged attacks occurred within a very short timeframe – just one week.

The terrorists were successful because the government – including Congress – failed. They took advantage of our failure to achieve early environmental detection of the agent, failure to quickly recognize its occurrence in livestock, failure to rapidly diagnose the disease caused in sick patients, failure to consistently fund public health and health care preparedness, failure to establish sufficient medical countermeasure stockpiles, failure to make sure that non-traditional partners communicate. Ultimately, they took advantage of our failure to make biodefense a top national priority.

Sadly, much as the 9/11 Commission observed in its analysis of the attacks of 2001, the attacks of 2016 occurred because of another “failure of imagination.”

SCENARIO

There were failures of prediction, early warning, and detection:

- ▶ The Intelligence Community failed to warn of a well-planned and direct attack on the United States and its global interests.
- ▶ HHS, USDA, and DHS failed to detect the biological agent upon release.

There were and continue to be failures to respond appropriately:

- ▶ HHS and USDA still have no way to treat exposed people or animals.
- ▶ The CDC, USDA, DHS, FBI, and DOD failed at their initial efforts at identification and attribution.
- ▶ Critical infrastructure is faltering because workers cannot or will not report to their jobs because they lack protection.
- ▶ Emergency service professionals are struggling valiantly to do their jobs, all while keeping their own families safe, in the absence of adequate protection.
- ▶ DOD must remove itself from the domestic response while it redirects resources and expertise to defend the United States against enemies seeking to take advantage of these vulnerabilities.

The Nation failed to heed the advice of the 9/11 Commission, the WMD Commission, and many other experts who warned of the dangers of biological terrorism and warfare.

We must now add the failure to appreciate the threat, generate political will, and take action in the face of looming danger.

This is only the second time in the history of Congress that two permanent committees have joined to conduct a bicameral investigation, the first being for the 9/11 investigation. We are holding this hearing today to find out exactly what happened, how this leadership failure occurred, and what needs to be done to recover from these attacks. We also intend to see what it will take to prevent additional attacks and to make sure we have done all we can to be prepared in case these efforts fall short. We will hear from three panels of witnesses:

First, from the four governors of the states and one U.S. territory where these biological attacks occurred.

Second, from the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, and the Director for National Intelligence, whom we call upon to explain why they missed indications of the impending use of biological weapons.

Third, from the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and the Secretary of Homeland Security, whom we ask to explain their extraordinary challenges in surveillance, detection, identification, response, and attribution.

The Chair now recognizes the Ranking Member of the Committee for an opening statement.

INTRODUCTION: THE CHALLENGE OF LEADERSHIP

The biological threat carries with it the possibility of millions of fatalities and billions of dollars in economic losses. The federal government has acknowledged the seriousness of this threat and provided billions in funding for a wide spectrum of activities across many departments and agencies to meet it. These efforts demonstrate recognition of the problem and a distributed attempt to find solutions. Still, the Nation does not afford the biological threat the same level of attention as it does other threats: There is no centralized leader for biodefense. There is no comprehensive national strategic plan for biodefense. There is no all-inclusive dedicated budget for biodefense.

Biological threats – including biological warfare, bioterrorism, and infectious disease – are not new. The United States engaged in a biological warfare program from 1943 to 1969¹ not only to develop biological weapons for offensive use, but also to develop programs and countermeasures to help defend against the use of biological weapons by the former Soviet Union and other enemies.² The United States eventually decided that the use of biological weapons could not achieve military aims without resulting in questionable control of both affected areas and the disease imparted by these weapons. We shifted to a defense-only program thereafter, allowing for civilian agencies to address the dangers associated with naturally occurring infectious diseases. The passage of time during which we believed that other nations had ceased their own offensive biological weapons programs led us to reduce the priority placed on addressing biological threats.

The former Soviet Union began its biological weapons program in the 1920s. While the Soviet Union signed onto the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) and claimed to have discontinued its biological weapons program in the 1970s, Soviet defectors and other sources relayed that the program continued into the 1990s, producing thousands of tons of weaponized biological agents and the weapons themselves, and renewing apprehension.³ Today, Russia still has not allowed inspectors into all of its facilities capable of producing biological weapons. South Africa also built and maintained an arsenal into the 1990s with the intent of using agents like human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and Ebola on opponents of apartheid.⁴ For these and other reasons, President William J. Clinton became concerned and directed White House staff to evaluate the veracity of various biological scenarios and assess federal efforts to build defenses against intentionally introduced and naturally occurring biological events. After a flurry of briefings and the implementation of new programs to improve domestic biodefense against high-impact events such as bioterrorism and pandemic influenza, investments eventually began to wane until the anthrax attacks in 2001 again revived interest.

The biological threat has not abated. At some point, we will likely be attacked with a biological weapon, and will certainly be subjected to deadly naturally occurring infectious diseases and accidental exposures, for which our response will likely be insufficient. There are two reasons for this: 1) lack of appreciation of the extent, severity, and reality of the biological threat; and 2) lack of political will. These conditions have reinforced one another.

This chapter addresses the following:

- I. The Biological Threat is Real and Growing
- II. Previous Commissions Have Expressed Concern
- III. The United States Lacks Centralized Biodefense Leadership

I. THE BIOLOGICAL THREAT IS REAL AND GROWING

Current and former federal officials, as well as a number of private sector experts,⁶ believe that the biological threat is real and growing, and urge increased activity to defend the nation against it.⁶ This biological threat is multifaceted. Unlike other threats, those that are biological in nature can be borne of malicious intent, more benign human activity, or simple chances of nature.

The Department of State (DOS) assesses that China, Iran, North Korea, Russia, and Syria continue to engage in dual-use or biological weapons-specific activities and are failing to comply with the BWC.⁷ Caches of incompletely destroyed or buried biological weapons materials from old state programs⁸ can now be accessed again by new state programs, and then smuggled to other regions for use in today's wars and by today's terrorists.⁹ Weapons that once consumed a great deal of time and resources to make now take far less, and it is reasonable to believe that what the United States could accomplish more than 40 years ago, others can accomplish now.¹⁰

The resources necessary to produce biological weapons¹¹ are more easily obtained by states and terrorists than in years past.¹² For example, regarding ISIL, former Representative Mike Rogers believes that, "the longer they have freedom of operation in any space that contains those kinds of elements, I think that's dangerous to the United States and our European allies."¹³ Additionally, terrorist organizations,¹⁴ domestic militia groups,¹⁵ and lone wolves¹⁶ have expressed intent to use and shown some capacity to develop biological weapons. Advances in science have led to a convergence of biology and chemistry, and an ability (through synthetic biology) to create and combine agents. All of this has expanded the number and types of potential biological weapons¹⁷ and made it more difficult to fully comprehend the enormity of the threat.¹⁸

Discerning surreptitious intent to develop biological weapons that could inflict catastrophic effects on the United States is an enormous intelligence challenge. Despite the dire consequences associated with and its own abiding concern about the biological threat, the Intelligence Community (IC) has neither been provided with nor itself dedicated sufficient resources to collect, analyze, and produce intelligence regarding the biological threat to the same extent as it has with other types of threats. The ubiquity of knowledge necessary to weaponize biological agents also prevents the IC from using more traditional nation-specific or expertise-specific approaches to intelligence collection. Additionally, the IC has not been able to invest in or hire sufficient numbers of scientists and others with needed expertise and ability to participate in biological intelligence activities. This is not to say that the IC has made no attempts at collection, analysis, and dissemination of intelligence relevant to the biological threat. However, the vast nature of the threat is out of proportion with the limited resources and emphasis dedicated to addressing it by the IC as well as those that task and request information from the IC.

Pandemic and highly pathogenic influenzas challenge the globe every year and result in the loss of thousands of human and frequently millions of animal lives, respectively.¹⁹ Globally prevalent diseases for which countermeasures have already been developed are mutating and defeating what little we have to treat them.²⁰ Emerging diseases – such as Dengue fever and Chikungunya – are occurring with greater frequency, spreading throughout the United States, and lack treatments. Naturally occurring diseases can also devastate livestock, crops, and dairy or produce supplies, harming millions of people and producing a debilitating effect on the U.S. economy.

Accidents can also result in the release of harmful pathogens. Some laboratory leaders have paid insufficient attention to the details necessary to ensure laboratory biosafety and have inadvertently contributed to the biological threat. Poor biosafety resulted in the unintended release of anthrax from Russian laboratories in 1979,²¹ anthrax from a U.S. military laboratory at Dugway Proving Grounds in 2015,²² and *Burkholderia pseudomallei* from a Tulane University research center in 2014.²³ These incidents underscore how much we still have to learn about the hardness of biological agents, the checks necessary to ensure biosafety standards are being met, and the science of how long it takes laboratories to realize that previously effective procedures no longer work.

Poor biosecurity also increases the biological threat.²⁴ Even our highest level government laboratories have fallen short in this regard. For example, in 2001, anthrax was illicitly removed from the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute on Infectious Disease and used in the perpetration of the anthrax attacks that year. Decades-old vials of smallpox virus were found in a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) freezer on the campus of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Bethesda, Maryland in 2014, even though previous searches had been conducted in order to fulfill the requirement that all remaining U.S. stocks be consolidated at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).²⁵ Major mishaps at the CDC that same year resulted in investigations, inspections, congressional hearings, and closure of certain laboratories that tested for suspected bioterrorist agents.²⁶ Exacerbating the problem was that these breaches of biosecurity resulted in the temporary (yet extended) restriction of laboratory activities and closure of laboratories that perform critical testing and research necessary to meet and reduce the biological threat – leaving the Nation with diminished capability to secure itself.

II. PREVIOUS COMMISSIONS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN

Some leaders in the political community have indeed appreciated the large and multifaceted nature of the biological threat, including the members of earlier commissions. Each referenced the biological threat, took this threat seriously, noted the potential for significant impact, and called for action. The U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century (Hart-Rudman, 1999, 2000, and 2001) recognized the potential for epidemics to become pandemics and the dual-use nature of scientific discoveries.²⁷ The Commission on Terrorist Attacks on the United States (9/11 Commission, 2004) echoed Hart-Rudman and posited that more than two dozen terrorist groups were pursuing biological materials but that high-level government leaders were expressing varying levels of concern regarding this threat.²⁸ The Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) (Robb-Silberman, 2005) joined the Hart-Rudman and 9/11 Commissions in their concern and described in excruciating detail the failings and weaknesses of the IC regarding the biological threat.²⁹ Finally, the Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism (Graham-Talent, WMD Commission, 2008) reaffirmed the findings of these previous commissions and determined that the priority placed on addressing the biological threat was too low to ensure national security.³⁰ Despite the observations made by these commissioners over more than 20 years, and despite action and progress in some areas, no one has yet taken the lead to address this threat in a strategic and coordinated fashion.

III. THE UNITED STATES LACKS CENTRALIZED BIODEFENSE LEADERSHIP

The centralization of leadership at the highest levels of government is the norm only for those issues deemed to require such centralization. These are typically matters fundamental to the well-being of the Nation (e.g., national security, homeland security, economic security). Occasionally, a subset of these rises to the fore: counterterrorism, influenza pandemic preparedness, an acute economic crisis. In these cases, an official is often placed in charge, sometimes permanently, but often only temporarily.

The United States has utilized a number of options for centralizing leadership around issues of national importance. These include: 1) placing a federal department or agency official in charge; 2) assigning responsibility to White House staff; 3) naming a czar; or 4) placing an elected official in charge. The last three Presidential Administrations have taken one or more of these approaches to address biodefense, with varying levels of success, and with only partial centralization. What each approach lacked was a figure whose job it was to ensure that all of the federal government was strategically working toward the common goal of comprehensive biodefense.

PLACING A FEDERAL DEPARTMENT OR AGENCY OFFICIAL IN CHARGE

The dissolution of the United States' offensive biological weapons program in 1969 forced a change in the offensive/defensive leadership paradigm for biological threats. Dropping the offensive program, assuming a defensive-only posture, and increasing commitments from other nations that they were not developing or using biological weapons meant that the Department of Defense (DOD) would no longer take a primary leadership role in biodefense.

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Department of Agriculture (USDA) – departments with the responsibility for addressing the impact of biological threats to humans, animals, and plants – did not take up the mantle of leadership or were not successful when they tried. For example, HHS was unable to effectively lead other members of the Executive Branch to produce a national strategy for pandemic influenza. This requirement was initially assigned to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare by President James E. Carter in 1977 and carried over when the new HHS was created in 1980. It was subsequently removed from HHS by President George W. Bush and finally fulfilled by the White House when it produced the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza in 2005 and the Implementation Plan for this Strategy in 2006.

In accordance with the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act (PAHPA) of 2006 (P.L. 109-417), Congress mandated that the HHS Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR) be responsible for interagency coordination of preparedness for and response to biological events. Congress also intended for the ASPR to be a (and some would argue *the*) leader of national biodefense efforts, although the statute is limited to preparedness and response elements of biodefense. The ASPR played a role in managing some aspects of the recent Ebola crisis (e.g., overseeing the Public Health Emergency Medical Countermeasures Enterprise (PHEMCE) MCM efforts, administering Ebola supplemental funding for hospital preparedness). However, President Barack H. Obama did not place the ASPR in charge of overall Ebola response coordination, having chosen instead to name a coordinator independent of the departments and agencies. Even if the ASPR had coordinated this and other biological crises in their entirety, in reality there is no mandate for the ASPR

to lead all interagency activities across the entire biodefense enterprise. Further, it is unclear how leadership and coordination on the part of the ASPR would fit within the requirements of the National Response Framework, especially since mention of the ASPR was removed from the Framework when it was last updated.

There are also presidential and congressional mandates and intent for the Secretary of Homeland Security to lead and coordinate interagency activities in support of homeland security – addressing biological and chemical attacks, accidents, or events affecting the homeland. In 2009, then-Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano took charge of the interagency response to the H1N1 influenza pandemic, prior to the confirmation of Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) followed some of its plans for leadership and coordination, but set aside others even within the Department (e.g., making last minute changes to previously established and exercised plans, identified leaders, and responsibilities that had originally been assigned to the U.S. Coast Guard). When DHS experienced limited success in leading and coordinating interagency efforts during the H1N1 pandemic, the White House took over.

ASSIGNING RESPONSIBILITY TO A MEMBER OF THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF

Since the establishment of the National Security Council (NSC) staff, typically, at least one staff member has addressed some aspect of biodefense. Some of the appointments have been strategic and forward-looking; others have been reactive to events. The first person to formally address biodefense policy at the White House was an assistant surgeon general from the U.S. Public Health Service, detailed to the NSC by Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala in 1998. This dedicated biodefense policy position was eliminated following the 2000 election. In the months following the attacks on September 11, 2001 and the anthrax attacks shortly thereafter, a variety of White House staff and detailees were assigned to work on anthrax specifically and biodefense more generally. In 2002, Assistant to the President Tom Ridge created a biodefense directorate in the newly formed Homeland Security Council (HSC) and staffed it with a Special Assistant to the President and three additional full-time professionals. This office remained in place within the HSC through the end of the Bush Administration. Following the 2008 election, President Obama merged the HSC staff with the NSC staff and eliminated this biodefense office. Instead, he distributed various biosecurity functions throughout the NSC, including the WMD Terrorism and Threat Reduction, Development and Democracy, and Resilience Directorates. (President Obama did appoint a WMD Coordinator, discussed below, but this position was not focused on biodefense). When Ebola emerged in the United States in 2014, the President appointed a dedicated Ebola czar to coordinate the U.S. government's response from the White House.

Opinions vary regarding the effectiveness of the present NSC organizational construct to address biodefense. Some argue that its efforts are fractionated, while others contend that the wider variety of staff involved allows for broader involvement of multiple policy offices across the spectrum of biodefense activities. While it is possible for other White House councils and offices to address biodefense,³¹ they generally only do so when a specific biodefense issue affects a prominent ongoing responsibility (such as when the White House National Economic Council assessed the impact of a foot-and-mouth disease outbreak on the U.S. economy). Regardless of specific title or location in the chain of command, the imprimatur of the President can help overcome the challenges faced by multiple federal departments and agencies that must act and work together to achieve biodefense aims.

This was one of the reasons that Congress – through the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-53, herein referred to as the 9/11 Act) – created the Office of the U.S. Coordinator for the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism. The 9/11 Act specifies that this Office house a Coordinator and Deputy Coordinator, appointed by the President and responsible for serving as the principal advisors to the President on all matters relating to WMD proliferation and terrorism. The 9/11 Act goes on to make this Coordinator (often referred to as the WMD Coordinator) responsible for developing a comprehensive national strategy and individual policies to combat WMD proliferation and terrorism, incorporating (among other things): measurable targets and milestones with which to hold agencies accountable; identification of gaps, duplications, and inefficiencies in existing programs and initiatives; plans to strengthen and expand the scope of existing programs and initiatives; new and innovative programs to address emerging challenges and threats; coordination among the various federal agencies involved in addressing this threat; and plans to strengthen U.S. commitment to international non-proliferation efforts.

President George W. Bush did not implement this recommendation. President Obama named Dr. Gary Samore as the WMD Coordinator in 2009, without submitting him for the Senate confirmation called for in statute. His focus was far more on nuclear threats than biological. Upon Dr. Samore's departure, Dr. Elizabeth Sherwood Randall took on these and additional responsibilities as the Coordinator on Defense Policy, Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction and Arms Control in 2013 (also without being Senate confirmed) but left that position a year later when she became the Deputy Secretary of Energy. The position of the WMD Coordinator is not currently filled. The difficulty of subjecting White House staff to congressional mandate is that it is up to the President to decide how best to manage his or her staff, not Congress. A mandated position also may not fit logically within organizational constructs that change as Administrations and their priorities change. Congress implicitly seems to respect this Presidential authority and has not forced the issue of ensuring that any President fill this position.

NAMING A CZAR

Certain topics achieve distinction as having national impact, but require more subject matter expertise and focused effort than departments and agencies in the Executive Branch can afford to dedicate. The term czar is occasionally and informally used to identify the individual the President has appointed to address such an issue if it is high priority and of great interest. Czars are political appointees that may or may not be confirmed by the Senate, with positions that may or may not carry over from one Administration to another. While czars often enjoy a higher profile than other members of the White House staff, those that do not hold institutionalized or authorized positions often lack sufficient authority or power to enact necessary change because they oversee only one particular part of policy. A number of czars have addressed various biological threats, including avian influenza, Ebola, and terrorism.³²

PLACING AN ELECTED OFFICIAL IN CHARGE

Little has been done to establish a strong, well-funded, centralized authority overseeing national efforts in biodefense. This lack of high level and centralized leadership prevents critical problems from receiving proper focus and attention within the Executive Branch. It also weakens those efforts that exist among the agencies that strive to work in the absence of such leadership. While it is the nature of democracies to be reactive, reactionary policies and programs do not serve the Nation's best interest when it comes to the biological threat. Time and again, the United States has been forced to respond to intentional, naturally occurring, and accidental biological events,

with real human, animal, environmental, and financial costs. These complex interagency responses can either be reactive, or they can be planned, funded, and exercised ahead of time under the guidance of a centralized leader.

The President should retain flexibility to address biodefense at the White House in whatever way he or she chooses. However, such flexibility should not continue to result in the absence of a concentrated and continuous effort across Administrations. Further, if the White House takes charge or is expected to take charge of every significant biological event, then this responsibility should be institutionalized.

This responsibility can be institutionalized in a number of offices in the White House, including that of the Vice President. The Vice President has a direct line to the President and, when imbued with authority as the President's proxy, can act on his or her behalf. There is precedent for Vice Presidents assuming responsibility for various initiatives. For example, President Clinton appointed Vice President Albert A. Gore to lead the National Performance Review³³ in 1993 and made the Vice President responsible for translating the recommendations of the Review into improved government performance and results. The Vice President's leadership was critical to producing a bill that was sent to Congress to address these requirements. While Congress did not pass that bill, it did produce and pass the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), which addressed many of the Review's recommendations. Vice President Gore retained responsibility for seeing that the Act was implemented and personally held the Executive Branch accountable in this regard.

The primary goal of centralization is to place the coordination and oversight responsibility in a location that will have sufficient authority regardless of personalities or party in power, and in a position with the ability to make executive decisions. The Vice President possesses these attributes.

Recommendation 1

Centralize responsibility for biodefense in the Office of the Vice President of the United States. The Vice President should be responsible for the Office of the Vice President and the Office of the Vice President should be the lead agency for biodefense. A memorandum of the findings between the Vice President and the White House should be developed.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Empower the Vice President with jurisdiction and authority. The President should assign the Vice President in charge of national biodefense. The Vice President should have the authority to coordinate national biodefense for the United States, address relevant congressional issues and requirements, and coordinate the U.S. biodefense enterprise. The President should also provide the Vice President with resources, authority, and flexibility to coordinate among the various executive agencies and the White House.

b. **Empower the Vice President with budget authority.** The President must give the Vice President authority to review and advise on the budget, including budgets for international assistance, so as to facilitate the Vice President in leading the budgetary coordination and implementation of the National Security Strategy. This will facilitate international cooperation, including the budgetary coordination of the Global Health Security Agenda and the Global Health Security Strategy.

The Nation has not come to fully appreciate the severity of the biological threat and our leaders have not demonstrated the political will to fully address it. We must address these shortcomings by prioritizing the following areas: 1) coordination and accountability among federal departments and agencies; 2) collaboration between federal and non-federal stakeholders; and 3) innovation that addresses both lingering and novel problems. The chapters that follow explore each of these in turn.

CHAPTER 1: THE NEED FOR LEADERSHIP IN ACHIEVING COORDINATION

Biodefense necessitates complex and sophisticated multi-disciplinary efforts, successful navigation of which requires coordination among government, academia, and industry. Centralized effective leadership is necessary to align these efforts. Because such leadership is lacking, federal biodefense activities are insufficiently coordinated. Authority and responsibilities are dispersed among many cabinet agencies, without the benefit of a single leader to provide directives and receive reports. Thus, while outcomes of individual department and agency efforts may or not be successful, no one is held fully accountable for the necessary outcomes of a mission-oriented and integrated biodefense enterprise.

This problem is further complicated by the lack of a comprehensive biodefense strategy. A decade of profusion of policy directives indicates well-intentioned efforts to facilitate progress, yet the staggering number has resulted in a fragmented enterprise made less stable as Administrations pass from one to the next and priorities change. Additionally, a unified approach to budgeting is a vital part of any strategic interagency effort, and this is lacking as well. This undoubtedly means that spending is redundant in some areas and deficient in others.

The lack of coordination manifests in a variety of areas of critical importance to biodefense: the gathering and dissemination of intelligence; consideration of animal health and one health approaches as central tenets of health security; prioritization of emerging threats; and investment in areas including MCM, bioterror attribution, and decontamination and remediation.

Congressional oversight and legislation are critical for ensuring that the biodefense enterprise works. Congressional efforts have been hampered, however, by the lack of a comprehensive and cohesive biodefense strategic plan from the Executive Branch, as well as extensive cross-committee jurisdiction that often dilutes congressional focus.

This chapter addresses coordination and accountability in the following areas:

- I. The Imperative for Cogent Governance
- II. Improving Intelligence Community Efforts
- III. Recognizing and Institutionalizing the One Health Concept
- IV. Coordinating Medical Countermeasure Efforts
- V. Establishing an Attribution Apparatus
- VI. Taking Charge of Decontamination and Remediation

I. THE IMPERATIVE FOR COGENT GOVERNANCE

NEED FOR A COORDINATING BODY AT THE WHITE HOUSE

To address cross-sectoral issues, organizations often form coalitions. Agencies within the federal government sometimes create coalitions of their own volition. However, competing priorities and demands more often dominate their day-to-day activities and drive them to operate independently. The White House has also established coalitions to achieve certain aims, but

these efforts to obtain consensus have at times resulted in diluted strategies and plans that all stakeholders can agree on but which do little to move the needle.³⁴

As many as a dozen departments and agencies participate in biodefense,³⁵ a mission space with governmental and nongovernmental members and activities authorized, ordered, and guided by various statutes, presidential directives, and other policy documents. Some of these departments and agencies show substantial initiative and execute on big or important ideas in biodefense; others work in a supportive capacity; still others engage temporarily, sporadically, or with limited enthusiasm. More than fifty political appointees³⁶ have been given some part of the biodefense mission, but largely act independently. Because of the scope of this scheme, these appointees often have little awareness of similar or potentially synergistic activities throughout the federal government, creating an inefficient and costly system that may not meet overarching mission objectives. A much more coordinated approach is called for that leverages the resources of the Nation that exist beyond those of the federal government.

Recommendation 2

Establish a Biodefense Coordination Council at the White House, led by the Vice President. A consistent approach is needed to enhance collaboration among departments, agencies, nongovernmental organizations, tribes, and industry through an approach that facilitates the communication of essential information that can be leveraged to operate independently.

ACTION ITEMS:

- 1. **Require broad federal participation.** The Vice President should direct all departments and agencies that have a role in biodefense, in accordance with the National Biodefense Strategy of the United States of America, to propose recommendations to be included in the Biodefense Coordination Council. The disciplines should be of the Defense Science Board.
- 2. **Establish a national center for information sharing and collaboration.** The Vice President should direct the Office of the Director of National Intelligence to propose a national center for information sharing and collaboration that can be used to facilitate communication and collaboration among the various federal agencies that have a role in biodefense.
- 3. **Structure the Centers for Congressionally and Executive-Branch Directed Activities.** The Vice President should direct the Office of the Director of National Intelligence to propose a structure for the Centers for Congressionally and Executive-Branch Directed Activities that can be used to facilitate communication and collaboration among the various federal agencies that have a role in biodefense.

A SINGLE, COMPREHENSIVE, AND HARMONIZED STRATEGY IS NEEDED

The sheer number of federal documents that address biodefense indicates significant interest in the subject and intent to deal with it through statute and executive direction (Table 2). In addition to or as a result of the documents listed in Table 2, the Executive Branch has promulgated numerous other policy and planning documents, which only add to the spectrum of requirements.

These include the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza (2005) and its associated Implementation Plan (2006); the updated National Response Framework (2008), its Biological Incident Annex, and other associated annexes;³⁸ the 2014 PHEMCE Strategy and Implementation Plan (2014); and the National Strategy for Countering Biological Threats (2009). Together, these provide a foundation for federal biodefense activities. But the large number of documents reflects a system that has become too fragmented to be enforced and implemented in a coherent, prioritized, and unitary fashion. Biodefense for the 21st Century (HSPD-10) was the most comprehensive strategic biodefense document at the time it was drafted. Defense of United States Agriculture and Food (HSPD-9), however, was issued independently and the two directives are distinct. HSPD-10 is now more than a decade old and numerous other related policy directives have been issued and important programs begun since then. The National Strategy for Countering Biological Threats, which by title sounds like a comprehensive document, is actually more focused on supporting a subset of mission areas outlined in HSPD-10, largely with respect to international efforts.

Operating in the absence of a comprehensive biodefense strategy has made the need for comprehensive biodefense planning clear. Many additional planning documents often only address isolated elements of biodefense (e.g., post-exposure prophylaxis for certain bioterrorist agents) or individual diseases (e.g., pandemic influenza) and are not always incorporated into broader plans. Additionally, many of the plans developed over the past decade used models of naturally-occurring infectious diseases rather than weaponized pathogens.³⁹ DHS, DOD, HHS, and USDA made assumptions about the time and resources needed to treat severely ill persons and animals exposed to biological agents, but have not reexamined these suppositions in light of recently declassified information from the U.S. biological weapons program.

The lack of a comprehensive, cohesive, and regularly updated strategy has resulted in disorganization and confusion, particularly as Administrations change and the institutional knowledge associated with them is lost. Biodefense planning has become driven by agencies with requirements that may or may not meaningfully contribute to national biodefense. A single, comprehensive, and harmonized strategy to pull these myriad documents together is lacking.

TABLE 2: EXAMPLES OF BIODEFENSE DIRECTIVES, PUBLIC LAWS, AND TREATIES⁴⁰

PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVES	
▪ Executive Order 13286: Executive Order on National Biodefense Strategy	
▪ NSCOM (1970)	
▪ Executive Order 13296: Executive Order on the National Strategy for Combating Weapons of Mass Destruction (2003)	
▪ HSPD-7: Critical Infrastructure Identification, Protection, and Restoration (2003)	
▪ HSPD-8: National Preparedness Strategy (2003)	
▪ HSPD-9: National Strategy for Homeland Security (2003)	
▪ HSPD-10: Homeland Security Strategy (2003)	
▪ HSPD-11: Medical Countermeasures Against Weapons of Mass Destruction (2003)	
▪ HSPD-12: Federal Health and Medical Preparedness (2003)	
▪ Presidential Policy Directive on National Strategy for Combating Biological Threats (2010)	
PUBLIC LAWS	
▪ The Biological Weapons Control and消除 Agent Act of 1949 (PL 81-612)	
▪ The Chemical and Biological Weapons Control and Elimination Act of 1993 (PL 103-227)	
▪ The Limiting and Strengthening Arms Control, Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001 (PL 107-296)	
▪ The Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002 (PL 107-212)	
▪ The Homeland Security Act of 2002 (PL 107-296)	
▪ The Patriot Act of 2001 (PL 107-296)	
▪ The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act of 2006 (PL 109-417)	
▪ Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (PL 110-53)	
▪ The Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Reauthorization Act of 2012 (PL 112-154)	
▪ Executive Order on Improving Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience (2013)	
INTERNATIONAL TREATIES, PARTNERSHIPS, AND INSTRUMENTS	
▪ Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (1972)	
▪ The Anthrax Group (1985)	
▪ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004)	
▪ International Health Regulations (2005)	
▪ Global Health Security Agenda (2014)	

Recommendation 3

Develop, implement, and update a comprehensive national biodefense strategy. The Vice President should direct the development of the National Biodefense Strategy of the United States of America. This strategy should be comprehensive and harmonized and should define an Executive Branch organizational structure and requirements; coordination and assignment plans; and resource requirements necessary for implementation.

ACTION ITEMS:

- a. **Coordinate the national biodefense policy.** The NSC should collect and harmonized policies, laws, and treaties and harmonize defense responsibilities, organizational structures, accountability, authorities, and security procedures throughout the federal government.
- b. **Identify requirements within all federal policies.** Based on the body of policy documents maintained by the NSC, and in liaison offices in the National Security Council structure, national security and defense requirements must be identified, assessed, and formalized. Executive Order 13691, "Establish National Security Offices and Liaisons," directed the NSC should "affirm" existing requirements in keeping with their scope of responsibilities and accountability.
- c. **Assess existing policy and requirements.** The NSC should identify the requirements identified in the previous step and determine the gaps in the current policy and requirements. The NSC should maintain a list of gaps and the required actions to fill those gaps, and the personnel assigned to lead the training on eliminating them.
- d. **Produce the National Biodefense Strategy of the United States of America and its implementation Plan.** The Vice President, based on the information collected from across the USG, should develop a comprehensive national biodefense strategy and implementation plan. Dispersed units and agencies must be held accountable for the execution of the plan for which they have been made responsible. A progress report should be presented to Congress annually.
- e. **Develop a gap analysis based on this comprehensive strategy.** Congress should direct the Comptroller, Accountability Office (CAO) to analyze gaps in resources mapped against the requirements of the National Biodefense Strategy, and determine resource requirements for an initial, mid, and long-term analysis.
- f. **Institute a major quadrennial biodefense review.** At the direction of Congress and under the leadership of the Vice President, the NSC should conduct a major quadrennial biodefense review of all relevant biodefense and security work, and update National Biodefense Strategy submitted for review of the Representative Biodefense Caucus by the Vice President.

UNIFYING THE BIODEFENSE BUDGET

Nearly \$80 billion was spent on biodefense from FY2001 through FY2014.⁴² The majority of this was put toward multi-hazard programs and about 10 percent toward biodefense-only initiatives. Allocations for individual programs or mission spaces have risen and declined depending on the circumstances of the day, but in general, about \$6 billion is annually spent on biodefense and related hazards. It is difficult to determine the adequacy of this funding level in the absence of an interagency biodefense strategy and a unified biodefense budget.

Awareness on the part of OMB of budgetary requirements and expenditures does not empower any part of the Executive Branch to control, coordinate, or prioritize biodefense activities. There is no unified concept or determination of what is meant by biodefense, leading OMB, House and Senate Committees on Appropriations, and private sector organizations to calculate differing budgetary totals. While some aspects of organizational budgets and appropriations bills are classified and many biodefense activities overlap with non-security public health efforts, these are not reasons to give up on determining how much is and should be spent on each element of biodefense. A unified approach to budgeting would enhance congressional oversight and allow the White House to better determine whether ongoing programs are aligned with the President's priorities. Additionally, many biodefense activities would greatly benefit from multiyear funding. The biodefense enterprise is no different from the national defense enterprise, which receives multiyear funding for a variety of its programs.

Recommendation 4

Unity biodefense budgeting: Create a budgetary framework that aligns programs of the national security enterprise. Congress should support the development of a biodefense budgetary enterprise-wide budget.

ACTION ITEMS:

Conduct a cross-cutting biodefense budget analysis. The White House and Congress should collect all the data available from the Vice President and the Director of OMB should identify gaps, including gaps in understanding federal programs. This analysis should be used to inform a biodefense budgetary outcome and departmental and congressional budgetary planning for the year.

Conduct a cross-cutting biodefense budget analysis. The White House and Congress should collect all the data available from the Vice President and the Director of OMB should identify gaps, including gaps in understanding federal programs. This analysis should be used to inform a biodefense budgetary outcome and departmental and congressional budgetary planning for the year.

Align budget items to the National Biodefense Strategy of the United States of America. The Director of CISA should require that all annual budget requests be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review, based on the National Biodefense Strategy and the budgetary resources.

Provide multi-year and multi-year funding for all biodefense programs. This includes operational funding, funding for all aspects of the mission, including acquisition, research and development, personnel, and the like. Presidential and Congressional biodefense funding currently begins from scratch every year. Additionally, operational funding is often provided on an ad hoc basis, which creates a cumbersome situation.

MORE COMPREHENSIVE OVERSIGHT IS NEEDED

Congressional oversight, appropriations, authorizations, and investigations of Executive Branch activities are essential. The 9/11 Commission and the WMD Commission recommended that Congress reform its dysfunctional homeland security oversight system. To this day, that oversight remains fragmented across at least 108 committees and subcommittees that claim some authority through Senate and House rules for homeland security oversight.⁴⁴ In biodefense, about two-dozen committees have authority for oversight, with one to two subcommittees per committee maintaining specific purview. Actual oversight, however, seems to occur among only a handful of interested committees. While this can prevent oversight discordance, it also means that some important activities escape congressional oversight altogether.

Frequently, the topics that the more active committees assess (e.g., threat awareness, biosurveillance and detection, MCM) comprise only a small subset of the broad range of issues that require substantial oversight. With some notable exceptions, most of the oversight (particularly through hearings) that occurs is in reaction to an event. Proactive oversight agendas are limited. The most common topics are frequently conducted as post hoc reviews of major missteps of federal program execution or how the government is managing current outbreaks. Many of the issues that deserve more congressional oversight are discussed in this report, and include IC activities to address the biological threat, adequacy of funding, animal disease surveillance (particularly zoonotic diseases), challenges in biological attribution, and military/civilian collaboration in biological research and development (R&D). Congress must exercise its authority on these issues more proactively, comprehensively, and in a coordinated manner.

Lacking an end-to-end strategy for biodefense, however, Congress must guess how responsibilities and requirements should fit together. This makes effective oversight much more difficult. Further, the extensive cross-committee jurisdiction described can dilute Congressional focus. The problem is less that there are too many committees exercising oversight jurisdiction, and more that they need to exercise that jurisdiction more frequently. Congress needs to lean forward, determine in which areas it has neglected oversight, develop a dedicated oversight agenda, and exercise it to ensure the entire biodefense mission space is addressed. (See Appendix A for suggested topics for the congressional oversight agenda.) Finally, Members of Congress are often insufficiently briefed on the threat, and as a result, may not deal with it urgently. This must change.

Recommendation 5

Determine and establish a clear congressional agenda to ensure national biosecurity. Congress must establish a clear and focused congressional oversight agenda to ensure that the IC is held accountable for its actions.

ACTION ITEM:

3. Develop joint congressional oversight agendas. At the start of each congressional session, Senate and House leadership should develop a clear congressional oversight agenda to ensure that the IC is held accountable for its actions. The agenda should focus on the most important issues facing the IC and should be developed in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence and the Director of Central Intelligence. The agenda should include a clear and focused congressional oversight agenda for the IC.

II. IMPROVING INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY EFFORTS

The IC is addressing the biological threat, but overall, the Community is unable to adequately collect and analyze intelligence due to insufficient resource allocation. The priority level placed on addressing the threat is not high enough to warrant the reallocation of resources (including human) necessary for increased collection, analysis, and distribution. This means that the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) is unable to dedicate sufficient human and other resources, enable IC agencies to establish or maintain relationships necessary for collection, or develop new strategies to gather information. The efforts the IC has been able to execute thus far are not well coordinated, with various agencies addressing different aspects of the threat. Additionally, the IC has taken some information that bystanders (those who are near to malevolent actors but are not directly involved in their actions) may possess into consideration, but has not been able to institute a full-scale program dedicated to this collection. For these reasons, the IC has not produced the sort of comprehensive analysis of the biological threat that it has for other threats.

Recommendation 6

Improve management of the biological intelligence enterprise. The DNI should increase the biological threat assessment function's resources and user-centered design to better support the IC's biological intelligence enterprise.

ACTION ITEMS:
• Create a National Intelligence Manager for Biological Threats. The DBI should create a National Intelligence Manager for Biological Threats. This role would coordinate with the DHS MTDs, the Office of Intelligence and Analysis (OIA), and other relevant agencies of the intelligence community. The Office of Intelligence and Analysis (OIA) can be tasked with responsibility for disseminating certain funds for intelligence-gathering, but reducing responsibility from the Central Intelligence Agency.
• Make biological weapons programs and related activities a discrete intelligence topic. The DBI should ensure that the IC has opportunities to coordinate and prioritize intelligence requirements for biological weapons programs and activities. The IC should be given the authority to conduct its own intelligence activities, and to coordinate with other intelligence agencies, and to collaborate with the private sector, when appropriate. This would be similar to the approach taken and tested in other areas, especially within the Community of Interest on Human Biological Threats.
• Address Bioterrorism. The DBI should ensure that the Office of Intelligence and Analysis (OIA) has the authority to conduct its own intelligence activities, and to coordinate with other intelligence agencies, and to collaborate with the private sector, when appropriate. This would be similar to the approach taken and tested in other areas, especially within the Community of Interest on Human Biological Threats.

III. RECOGNIZING AND INSTITUTIONALIZING THE ONE HEALTH CONCEPT

Among the bioterror threats for which DHS has issued a Material Threat Determination (MTD), all, except for smallpox, are zoonotic, meaning that they reach human beings through animals. The same holds true with the threat of emerging infectious disease.⁴⁵ Sixty percent of infections due to emerging infectious diseases are leaping into the human population via animals (with 72 percent of these coming from wildlife) and at an accelerating rate.⁴⁶

HSPD-10 requires disease surveillance of and detection in both human and animal populations. Divisions between human and animal health are artificial, since most pathogens of concern often affect both. Viewing them as parts of a whole is what defines a One Health approach to healthy populations. Together, human, animal, and environmental health comprise a dynamic and interconnected system that requires leadership and a strategic and coordinated approach to pull together traditionally fragmented divisions of expertise, responsibility, and authority while working effectively at the human-animal interface.⁴⁷

Efforts to achieve human health must be grounded in an ecological understanding of the entire health picture. While there has been some good work toward this end – for example, the development of a Rift Valley Fever vaccine for ruminants that in turn helps prevent transmission to humans – conversations about the protection of human health by controlling or avoiding emerging infectious diseases in an animal host are in general extremely limited. This is likely due to the

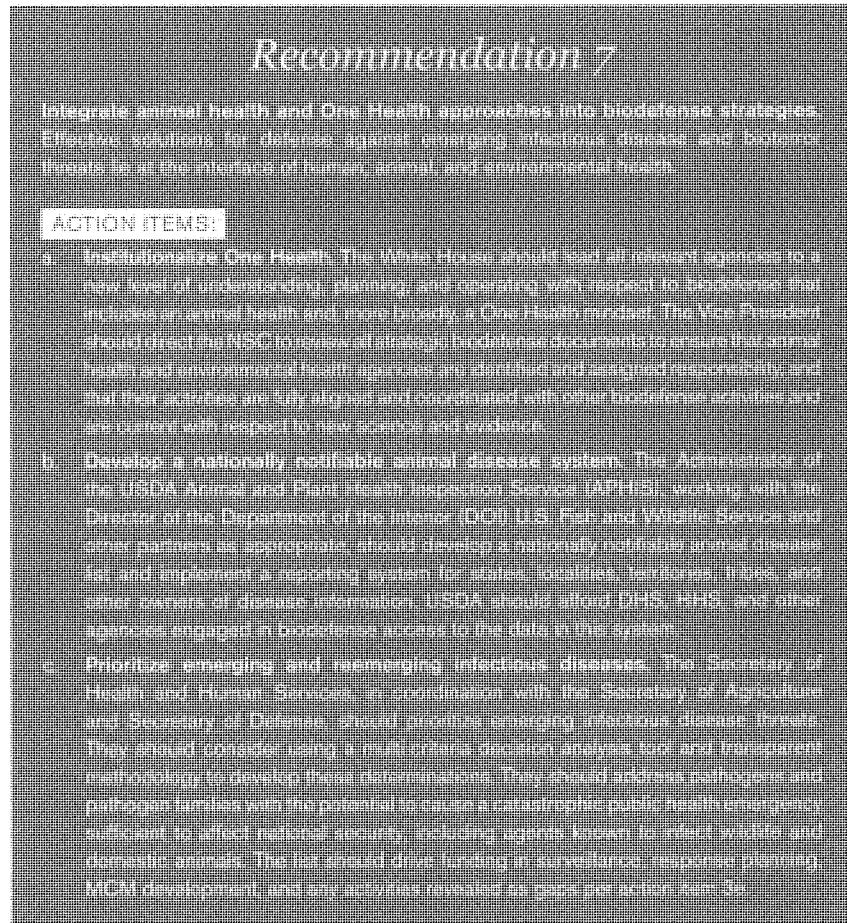
distributed nature of health-related responsibilities across the federal government, with a given department or agency typically supporting either human health or animal health, but not both (and with wildlife authorities rarely included at all). This is also due to the lack of leadership vision to recognize the interconnectedness of health across species.

Inadequate attention and funding is even more severe in the animal and environmental health sectors than in public health. It is hard to believe that the United States lacks a nationally reportable list of animal diseases in domestic and wild animals comparable to that for humans. The USDA does require the reporting of foreign animal diseases (e.g., foot-and-mouth disease), and the United States participates in reporting of animal diseases to the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). Yet reporting for domestic animal diseases is not required. Such a system would allow much greater information availability and coordination of effort across the government and with non-government stakeholders. In 2014, the USDA published a concept paper on what such a reporting system would look like.⁴⁸ It is time to move from concept to implementation. Reporting of animal diseases would allow for quicker response, reduced impacts on animal and human health, and better informed priorities regarding livestock infectious diseases.

A One Health approach can also inform priorities for human infectious diseases. When it became clear in 2014 that no countermeasures for Ebola were ready for the largest Ebola outbreak the world had ever seen, many policy conversations that followed were about priorities. We must have a means of determining what to fund with finite resources. The threats and risks among agents of both bioterror and emerging infectious diseases are equally serious. MTDs have been very important for the prioritization of activities around biodefense, yet there is no analogous prioritization system for emerging diseases.

The only way to direct multi-agency resources to where they are most needed, and to prevent the now-common approach of governing reactively through emergency supplemental funding, is to approach emerging infectious disease threats more strategically. Creating an emerging infectious disease priority list meaningful enough for utility across biodefense efforts and flexible enough to meet unexpected threats and the emergence of new diseases will not be easy. An inflexible list could allow unexpected and novel pathogens to blindside biodefense efforts. Different agents have drastically diverse effects on human health, human psychology, animal health, the environment, and the economy. Therefore, different stakeholders will place varying values on each pathogen.⁴⁹

When developed correctly with built-in flexibility, however, an emerging infectious disease priority list could help drive an organized and strategic approach to biodefense. Information of the kind that programs like the U.S. Agency for International Development's EPT PREDICT program afford is critical to the integrity of any such listing. A careful, thoughtful, adaptable, and transparent approach to developing the prioritization methodology is also important, as is a methodically developed and highly deliberate effort to consider the public health, economic, and security implications of a spectrum of pathogens and pathogen groups.



IV. COORDINATING MEDICAL COUNTERMEASURE EFFORTS

NIH is a basic research institution, created more than a century ago to organize the medical research efforts of the federal government.⁵⁰ The culture of basic research at NIH is distinct from the applied research culture of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA). This poses a challenge to interagency coordination, but one that is surmountable.

Per HSPD-10 and the Project BioShield Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-276), NIH must work with DHS, DOD, and other agencies to shape and execute an aggressive MCM research program. The establishment of the PHEMCE, an interagency coordinating body, has enabled better coordination along these lines, but it is still not optimal, particularly in terms of aligning NIH and

BARDA. The lack of coordination and focus speaks to the critical need to fashion a national strategy that establishes national funding priorities, not institutional ones. NIH's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) conducts research that is exceptionally important to defense against biological terrorism and emerging infectious diseases. All NIAID biodefense research, however, must be conducted with a transparent and strategic connection to end-user requirements.

Federally-funded scientific investigators are more likely to engage in early stage research, rather than to use the more private sector approach of focusing on specific product goals and end-user needs. This is one reason that Ebola MCM were not available when they were needed. In order to construct and implement an overarching vision, the PAHPA required a PHEMCE strategy and implementation plan, as well as a coordinated five-year budget plan that would update Congress and stakeholders on the entire MCM enterprise. This includes: basic research at NIH; advanced R&D at BARDA; approval, clearance, licensure, and authorized use of products; and procurement, stockpiling, maintenance and replenishment in the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) at CDC. The 2014 PHEMCE report and multiyear budget described roles for each department and agency and how they would meet PHEMCE's overarching goal to supply civilian MCM. Congress must conduct the detailed oversight that is necessary to ensure that these goals are being met.

NIH receives more than a billion dollars for biodefense annually (\$1.7 billion enacted in FY 2014 for the PHEMCE portfolio), primarily administered by NIAID for early stage R&D. Of the \$1.7 billion at NIAID, only 15 percent (\$257 million) is spent on agents determined to be material threats. Further, only \$415 million is provided to BARDA annually for advanced development of biodefense MCM candidates.⁵¹ It is unclear why advanced development – the far more costly stage of MCM development – is funded at a fraction of the amount of early R&D. The biopharmaceutical industry invests more than half of its budget in advanced development, while at DOD the number is only about 30 percent, and at HHS, only 10 percent.⁵² Investment strategies must match product development goals. The PHEMCE has worked to address this by submitting a multiyear budget to Congress, in which NIAID spending was included. The level of detail, however, offers limited insight into NIAID's specific spending priorities for the numerous MCM candidates in its portfolio.

Recommendation 8

Priority and sufficient resources must be provided to establish a national strategy for biodefense and to coordinate the roles of the various federal agencies and other stakeholders. The development of the MCM enterprise must be guided by a clear, transparent, and strategic process that includes the participation of all relevant stakeholders.

ACTION ITEMS:	
a.	Ensure National Institutes of Health research supports civilian medical countermeasure priorities. The Vice President should instruct the PHACM to coordinate with the Office of Biodefense and Countermeasures and the National Countermeasures and Medical Countermeasures Office to establish biodefense research priorities and ensure delivery of MC4 funding that addresses PHACM priorities.
b.	Ensure funding allocations are appropriate to meet the need. The Vice President should ensure adequate levels of funding allocated to biological agents that have been identified as MC4 priority threats, including funding for the MC4 Centralized Testing Program. The Vice President should instruct the Office of Biodefense and Countermeasures to establish a funding mechanism to support the development of MC4 technologies. The Vice President should instruct the Office of Biodefense and Countermeasures to increase funding for the MC4 Centralized Testing Program.
c.	Require a biosafety stand-down from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. The Vice President should instruct the Office of Biodefense and Countermeasures to instruct the Department of Health and Human Services to require a biosafety stand-down from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIH) to ensure that the NIH can conduct research on biological weapons and biological agents without interference from the Department of Defense (DOD). The Director of DOD should issue this stand-down to the Department of MC4 organizations that are part of the joint research program. The Vice President should instruct the Office of Biodefense and Countermeasures to instruct the NIH to conduct research on biological weapons and biological agents without interference from the Department of Defense (DOD). The Director of DOD should issue this stand-down to the Department of MC4 organizations that are part of the joint research program.

V. ESTABLISHING AN ATTRIBUTION APPARATUS

The ability to attribute crimes to their perpetrators is a necessary component of effective prosecution. Attribution is a challenge in any context, and becomes increasingly difficult with the involvement of numerous investigators and when unusual or novel weapons are used to execute crimes. This is the case with biocrimes, biological terrorism, and biological warfare. When biological agents are used for attacks, not only must crimes be attributed to particular perpetrators, but the pathogens and their sources must also be correctly identified. The United States has yet to fully establish this capability due to the inherent challenges associated with microbial forensic techniques and related analysis.

The law enforcement and public health communities have clear responsibilities for the investigations that fall under their respective domains. The intelligence, defense, and scientific communities also have important roles to play. Some excellent work, largely initiated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), has established cross-pollination among these communities. Yet the work is complicated. Representatives from these groups must align and support one another's investigations. This must occur despite differences in information sharing norms and requirements among these communities, and there being no single community that is in charge of the others for the purposes of attribution. Compounding

this challenge is the occasional addition of other communities (e.g., agriculture, commerce, homeland security, wildlife) as well as classification issues that result in some duplication of effort and parallel activities. The need for close coordination and collaboration is clear, but arrangements among all of these communities have yet to be formalized. Further, each of the principal agencies in these communities lacks the resources, processes, and infrastructure necessary to establish a system that meets the variety of tactical, operational, and strategic needs for attribution.

There is also no formal decision-making apparatus in place to assist leaders in addressing biological crimes and other events. The informal system lacks standards for and burdens of proof; requirements for source information; and standards for acceptable evidence, information, and intelligence. Response exercises rarely take attribution into consideration.

The National Bioforensics Analysis Center (NBFAC), part of the DHS National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center, conducts technical analyses in support of federal law enforcement investigations and attempts to coordinate multi-agency biological forensic efforts. The NBFAC has not become the resource for biological forensics the Nation needs. The DHS Science and Technology (S&T) Directorate (which administers the NBFAC) has struggled to coordinate with and serve other agencies, because it is not an operational organization and because its scientific goals sometimes run at cross-purposes to those of the operational communities it could serve. As a result, agencies sometimes decline to work with or utilize NBFAC. The FBI is by far the primary user of the NBFAC, and the facility should have been under the purview of the FBI from its inception.

Recommendation 9

Better support and inform decisions based on biological attribution. The United States must develop a formalized, decision-making apparatus for biological attribution that is capable of supporting and informing operational and strategic decisions. This recommendation is intended to support the development of a formalized, decision-making apparatus for biological attribution that is capable of supporting and informing operational and strategic decisions.

ACTION ITEMS:

- a. Establish a national biological attribution decision-making apparatus.** The United States must develop a formalized, decision-making apparatus for biological attribution that is capable of supporting and informing operational and strategic decisions. This recommendation is intended to support the development of a formalized, decision-making apparatus for biological attribution that is capable of supporting and informing operational and strategic decisions.

- b. Place the Federal Bureau of Investigation in charge of the National Bioforensics Analysis Center. The FBI is the primary custodian of NBCRNC, and has the needed credibility, scientific and technical skills, and authority from Congress and the public to conduct a determined, comprehensive, and timely investigation. The FBI should be charged with determining the nature and source of NBCRNC, and should be involved in the investigation, including pathology, laboratory, and communication. Congress should establish a NBCRNC steering committee. Congress should also establish a NBCRNC investigation committee.

VI. TAKING CHARGE OF DECONTAMINATION AND REMEDIATION

NEED FOR ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

Environmental remediation is the application of countermeasures to eliminate an agent from a geographically defined area. Additional research is needed to develop standards and protocols for the elimination or reduction of new infections caused by pathogens hiding in a particular environment. Natural environments are not pristine and often contain microbes at low levels tolerated by humans. Returning an environment to its baseline level after an event cannot be accomplished without first having measured the baselines, and this has not been systematically attempted. Further, while the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued some remediation guidance,⁵³ it seems no agency is statutorily responsible for deciding when an affected area has been sufficiently decontaminated, remediated, and cleared for re-occupancy.

Decontamination is also an issue in need of substantial additional effort. The Executive Branch is aware of this and a number of departments and agencies coordinate with each other and collaborate with the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to study environmental decontamination and remediation.⁵⁴ For example, a number of government agencies have collaborated to study remediation needs according to certain scenarios. Unfortunately, the results of these studies are of limited utility because many of these scenarios were extremely specific and cannot necessarily be applied to the wide variety of potential biological agents that could be used in an attack. Additionally, OSTP has since determined that research using disease- and scenario-specific approaches to determining remediation requirements is extremely costly.

The DHS S&T Directorate and Office of Health Affairs (OHA) partner with OSTP to conduct studies to determine post-biological event environmental decontamination and remediation requirements. Yet environmental remediation is an element of recovery, an aspect of emergency management addressed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Further, the release of biological agents may also create an emergency in a locality that may qualify for FEMA grants and other assistance. For these reasons, FEMA should also be at the table for these OSTP conversations and studies.

DOD and EPA conduct research in this area, with more limited efforts undertaken by other agencies (e.g., DHS, HHS, USDA). Both civilian and military programs are challenged by insufficient funds, increasing resistance of microbes to materials and treatments that would be used to decontaminate and remediate the environment after the release of biological agents, the

large number of organisms that could be used in biological weapons, and the potential for those weapons to end up in a variety of environmental contexts, from air to water to soil.

NEED TO MANDATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL DECONTAMINATION AND REMEDIATION

The EPA often inspects areas for accidental releases of biological agents and requests have been made of the Agency to conduct environmental decontamination and remediation following biological releases. The collection of environmental specimens to inform these activities can be difficult, however, when the EPA works with others (who may not be sufficiently trained) to collect environmental samples in support of these activities.⁵⁵ The EPA also uses a lengthy process to determine whether it should take responsibility for remediating an environment that has been contaminated with biological agents. This is because the EPA's history of holding companies responsible for having released contaminants into the environment (e.g., Superfund activities) does not align well with biological releases. The EPA may decide it should not remediate an area itself, instead providing options for decontamination and remediation that can be executed by others, including non-federal governmental agencies, academia, and industry. However, areas remain contaminated and unsafe during the time it takes to make a decision.

Recalling that the EPA initially balked at taking responsibility for remediating the congressional offices that were affected by the anthrax events of 2001, it is still unclear exactly who should be held responsible for environmental remediation when biological agents have been released accidentally or intentionally. Cost is a significant factor (e.g., estimates for the remediation of the Brentwood postal facility were as high as \$130 million more than ten years ago⁵⁶). There is no funding held in reserve for bioremediation by the EPA or any other agency. Some agency must be made responsible for biological environmental remediation and for coordinating similar and contributing efforts by other federal agencies. HSPD-10 states that the EPA coordinates with other departments and agencies in developing standards, protocols, capabilities, strategies, guidelines, and plans – but it does not make the EPA responsible for conducting biological remediation or decontamination, or for coordinating efforts with other agencies to do so.

NEED FOR COORDINATED EFFORTS TO MONITOR HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT AFTER EXPOSURE

Long-term monitoring is needed to ensure that pathogen contamination is reduced or eliminated, and that those affected (i.e., humans, animals, plants) are not re-exposed, do not suffer initially unnoticed reactions to the pathogens, and have not become pathogen reservoirs. Long-term monitoring of health has been undertaken for those exposed to a variety of contaminants during 9/11 response and recovery operations. However, the opportunity to participate in similar studies was not offered to those potentially exposed to anthrax on Capitol Hill in 2001. If there were any low-level immunological responses to the use of this biological agent, they were likely missed because no one was looking for them.

Some monitoring is undertaken after confirmed or suspected exposure, but not necessarily as a matter of policy or urgency. DOD monitors some military personnel exposed to a variety of contaminants. Other agencies (e.g., DOI, HHS, USDA) also monitor personnel exposed to pathogens in the course of their work, but only when the need seems dire. We are wasting the opportunity to ensure human and animal health and a clean environment, and to gather data on how biological agents impact health and the environment. Exposed individuals deserve better than to discover that they have been infected, or that countermeasures are not working, only after they have become obviously ill.

Recommendation 10

Establish a national environmental decontamination and remediation capacity
 The US must establish a national environmental decontamination and remediation capacity. This capacity must be able to respond to any environmental emergency, including natural disasters, chemical spills, and radiological incidents. This capacity must be able to respond to any environmental emergency, including natural disasters, chemical spills, and radiological incidents.

[ACTION ITEMS:]

- a. Include the Federal Emergency Management Agency in efforts to coordinate remediation. The White House should create a National Environmental Emergency Response Task Force, which should include the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy, to develop a policy for responding to environmental emergencies.
- b. Assign responsibility to the Environmental Protection Agency for environmental decontamination and remediation. Congress should amend the National Environmental Policy Act to give the EPA authority to respond to environmental emergencies. The EPA should be responsible for environmental decontamination and remediation, including the cleanup of chemical spills, radiological incidents, and natural disasters. Congress should provide the EPA with the authority to respond to environmental emergencies after natural disasters and chemical spills.
- c. Consider creation of a national environmental decontamination and remediation task force. The White House should establish a task force to coordinate environmental decontamination and remediation efforts. This task force should include the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Energy, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The task force should be responsible for responding to environmental emergencies. The task force should be responsible for responding to environmental emergencies after natural disasters and chemical spills. The task force should be responsible for responding to environmental emergencies after natural disasters and chemical spills. The task force should be responsible for responding to environmental emergencies after natural disasters and chemical spills.

CHAPTER 2: THE NEED FOR LEADERSHIP IN ELEVATING COLLABORATION

Recognizing that complex policy problems cannot be addressed by a single agency, the GPRA Modernization Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-352) required all federal agencies to collaborate on everything from information sharing to operations.⁵⁸ Applied to biodefense, the paradigm described must move beyond federal agencies and out to other levels of government and nongovernmental stakeholders.

While some activities are inherently federal, many of the most complex policy problems require input from and actions by these non-federal stakeholders to achieve success. Biodefense is an excellent example of such a complex policy problem. State, local, territorial, and tribal governments and nongovernmental partners carry out many critical biodefense activities from preparedness to recovery, but are often not consulted during policy development.

The federal government must also drastically increase the support provided to jurisdictions to allow them to build and sustain their biodefense capabilities. The rapid and accurate identification of pathogens moving through humans, animals, or the environment is a foundational capability, yet significant advances in biosurveillance and detection remain elusive because of technological barriers and bureaucratic challenges to effective collaboration and cooperation. The emergency services sector has been calling for increased support for some time, especially in terms of protective measures and access to threat information. Dwindling federal financial support has left hospitals and local health departments unable to fully prepare to serve their communities. Local communities are struggling to assure their populations that they can deliver the contents of the SNS quickly in a public health emergency. Finally, private and academic laboratories and other stakeholders struggle to prevent cybersecurity breaches to databases containing sensitive pathogen information.

Collaboration among industry, academia, and local health authorities – and a leader, such as the Vice President, who is willing to promote and hold federal agencies accountable for this collaboration – are needed to overcome these challenges.

This chapter addresses collaboration in the following areas:

- I. Achieving an Integrated Biosurveillance and Biodetection Capability
- II. Supporting Emergency Preparedness
- III. Creating Incentives for Hospital Preparedness
- IV. Advancing Planning for Medical Countermeasure Distribution and Dispensing
- V. Dealing with Cyber Threats to Pathogen Security
- VI. Reengaging with the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
- VII. Moving Beyond Defense Support to Civil Authorities

I. ACHIEVING AN INTEGRATED BIOSURVEILLANCE AND BIODETECTION CAPABILITY

Surveillance and detection are the means by which we achieve the earliest possible situational awareness for biological events that affect people, animals, the food supply, and the environment. They are fundamental capabilities that enable us to prevent or mitigate the consequences of these events. They also enable protection of national and local critical infrastructure, and support response and recovery operations.

Optimal surveillance and detection require a nationwide array of sensors and detectors at many levels, interconnected and working in parallel. This system must be expansive and address many aspects of disease spread, including human health (e.g., clinical, diagnostic), animal health (e.g., livestock, wildlife, companion), and sociocultural events (e.g., mass gatherings, burials). Surveillance and detection systems need to work quickly, indicating the presence of an agent in hours, not days or weeks. Such a capability can usefully inform rapid response operations, saving lives and other resources. Along with this capability, methods for information sharing between surveillance and biodefense partners are also needed. Many stakeholders could benefit from improved communication and real-time awareness.

HSPD-10 described ongoing federal efforts in 2004 to develop “an integrated and comprehensive attack warning system to rapidly recognize and characterize the dispersal of biological agents in human and animal populations, food, water, agriculture, and the environment.” At the time this system was proposed, it was bold, far-reaching, and necessary. Attempts thus far to accomplish it have been timid, narrow, and unsuccessful. As of 2015, the United States still lacks a nationwide, population-based disease surveillance system for human health. This is unacceptable.

The White House has failed to prioritize integrated biosurveillance and Congress has failed to mandate interagency participation, causing this insufficiency. As a result, an implementation plan to establish this capability has not yet been issued. Although the National Strategy for Biosurveillance was issued in 2012, it was very high level and lacked an accompanying implementation plan. The White House has drafted the plan, but as of publication of this report, has not yet released it. Without such a plan, interagency coordination and stakeholder involvement are far from optimal. The delay is likely due to the extreme interagency and stakeholder difficulties with information sharing, and insufficient leadership to make solving those difficulties a priority.⁵⁹

Recommendation 11

Implement an integrated national biosurveillance capability. The White House and Congress should review and revise the implementation plan for the National Strategy for Biosurveillance.

ACTION ITEM:

- a. **Implement the National Strategy for Biosurveillance.** Under the direction of the Vice President, the USG staff should be directed to revise the implementation plan for the National Strategy for Biosurveillance to incorporate information from federal, state, territorial, and private sector partners and to include the following: (a) a detailed, multi-agency implementation plan for the National Strategy for Biosurveillance; (b) a multi-agency, multi-level communication strategy for the National Strategy for Biosurveillance; (c) a multi-agency, multi-level, private sector liaison strategy; (d) a multi-agency, multi-level, private sector implementation plan; (e) a detailed implementation plan for the National Strategy for Biosurveillance; (f) a multi-agency, multi-level, and multi-national communication plan; (g) a detailed implementation plan for the National Strategy for Biosurveillance; and (h) a multi-agency, multi-level, and multi-national implementation plan for the National Strategy for Biosurveillance.

The current U.S. system consists of myriad surveillance and detection systems, operated by numerous agencies at many levels of government and within the private sector, with some working better than others and many not communicating with one another. Lower-level reporting into government systems – the key to early disease identification – is often delayed or provides too little data to provide real-time warning. Additionally, existing systems do not necessarily support existing response concepts of operations. For instance, the current system of syndromic surveillance – that which depends upon open source information, voluntary reporting of protected data, and astute clinical identification – lags behind the precise and timely communication of information needed to adequately support rapid response.

Recommendation 12

Empower non-federal entities to become equal biosurveillance partners. A timely, effective, and efficient biosurveillance system must include the participation of state, local, territorial, and tribal governments, and the private sector in order to be successful.

ACTION ITEM:

- a. **Create an interagency biosurveillance planning committee.** The Secretary of Homeland Security should issue this executive order for further collaboration with non-federal government and non-governmental partners. This group will identify and coordinate the required actions among a public, private, and non-governmental sector, local, territorial, and tribal agencies in order to implement and maintain the following: (a) a detailed implementation plan for the National Strategy for Biosurveillance; (b) a multi-agency, multi-level, and multi-national communication plan; (c) a multi-agency, multi-level, and multi-national implementation plan for the National Strategy for Biosurveillance; and (d) a multi-agency, multi-level, and multi-national implementation plan for the National Strategy for Biosurveillance.

By statute, DHS is charged with "integrating and analyzing data relating to human health, animal, plant, food, and environmental monitoring systems."⁶⁰ The National Biosurveillance Integration System (NBIS) was envisioned to fulfill this charge and to provide early warning. Despite the best of intentions, DHS has been unable to meet this mandate, in large part because other federal agencies were not required in the statute to share data or information with DHS. For example, NBIS does not have real-time access to CDC syndromic data, USDA food animal epidemiologic data, or VA hospital data. Laboratory data are only incorporated insofar as information is reported by state, local, territorial, and tribal departments of health into other systems that feed NBIS. Plenty of data are available, but agencies have little impetus for voluntarily sharing it, and no leader is forcing the issue. DHS continues to pursue access to this information, but is years behind where Congress and the Administration expected the system to be.

The lack of required interagency sharing of surveillance data means that NBIS can only function properly if the White House forces it to work. Without a strong and enforced executive order requiring agencies to cooperate on biosurveillance and detection, share data, and staff such a venture comprehensively, NBIS will continue to fail to fulfill its mandate.

Sensitive and specific biosurveillance can be attained only through a distributed network of activities. Medical records, clinical laboratory data, food recall data, human and animal pharmaceutical consumption, food and animal health surveillance, and water and air quality monitoring are examples of existing troves of data that could be shared with NBIS with the necessary leadership, correct approach, and comprehensive agreements. In return, the data owners could receive aggregated NBIS data, analyses, or other incentives.

A process must be put in place to provide for such mutually beneficial data sharing. Ownership is a barrier to interagency and private-to-public data sharing, but this challenge is not insurmountable. The collection and sharing of data in support of data owners' daily business processes – access to analytics, awareness of big-picture trends – could provide incentives to data owners to participate. Pilot programs have successfully shared surveillance and detection data within a limited number of states. The trusted third party model may also be successful for information sharing. Under this model, an independent third party builds trust, and coordinates data sharing and administration of a cloud-based temporary data storage system designed to feed into a national biological common operating picture. No government ownership or long-term data storage on government servers occurs in this model, which should help satisfy many of the concerns of data owners.

Recommendation 13

Optimize the National Biosurveillance Integration System. DHS must be strengthened to meet its obligation to build an early warning and a national surveillance system capable of working across interagency.

ACTION ITEMS:
<p>3. Assess the viability of the National Bio-surveilliance Integration System as the primary integrator of biosurveilliance data for the National Bio-surveilliance Integration System (NBIS). The NBIS is intended to be a central, web-based system that integrates data from multiple sources and provides a single point of access for the public and the scientific community. The NBIS will be the only bio-surveilliance system that is able to detect disease outbreaks if it cannot be detected by traditional efforts such as disease tracking.</p> <p>Inconsistencies in data, such as the lack of a single, comprehensive, and accurate source of information, are a major limitation to effective biosurveillance. A single, integrated system that can collect and analyze data from multiple sources will be a major step forward in the detection of disease outbreaks and the protection of public health.</p>

Animal health surveillance should not be segregated from the model of comprehensive biosurveillance described. What if, instead of simply identifying the location of an insidious zoonotic outbreak, one could identify its reservoir, the place in the animal world where it is hiding?

Livestock health surveillance is currently performed for the benefit of agriculture and food animal production. These data are typically unavailable on a regular basis to federal agencies with surveillance responsibilities outside of the USDA. Likewise, systematic collection of companion animal health data that would help detect any significant changes in the prevalence of zoonotic illness relevant to human health is almost entirely lacking. Enormous volumes of data exist, such as through franchised veterinary hospital systems with electronic medical records, and veterinary diagnostic laboratories, but these are untapped resources. Similarly, surveillance data of wildlife infectious diseases are collected disparately among federal agencies, non-federal governmental agencies, universities, and nongovernmental organizations. Their programs are not currently designed to provide comprehensive biosurveillance, nor to generate readily available information for other federal agencies with surveillance responsibilities.

The National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN), an effort to detect biological threats to the Nation's food animals, is necessary for effective biosurveillance. The NAHLN is a public-private cooperative effort between the USDA, the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians, and publicly funded state veterinary diagnostic laboratories. The collective and integrated work of its members allows for improved detection of emerging and zoonotic diseases, which helps protect animal health, public health, and the food supply. The veterinary diagnostic labs that are members are quite literally on the front lines of disease detection. Established in 2002, the NAHLN is funded through a combination of grants, fee-for-testing services, and administrative support from USDA. It has struggled to maintain even \$10 million worth of annual funding, its appropriations cut over the years to pay for other programs. As a result, the laboratories are unable to meet the threat and have at times eliminated positions and testing capacity for foreign animal diseases. Ten million dollars is a very small price to pay to protect one of America's major industries and portals for disease emergence. After the NAHLN struggled for years to obtain sufficient funding, in 2014 Congress authorized a specific funding line at \$15 million per year.⁶¹ NAHLN must be funded to this authorized level in order to meet the need.

Finally, although the establishment of policies to guide the emergency management of companion animals was strongly pursued following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, there is little evidence of infectious disease management guidance and planning for animals following the Ebola crisis. The cost of quarantine and care for a single dog in Texas suspected of Ebola exposure was nearly \$27,000.⁶² No formal, federal collaborative efforts are in place to develop plans or guidance that meaningfully and comprehensively incorporate policies, procedural recommendations, and requirements for dealing with a zoonotic infection that may be borne by dogs, cats, other companion animal species, or wildlife.

Recommendation 12

Improve surveillance of and planning for animal and zoonotic outbreaks. Governmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals can utilize a variety of tools to support the development and implementation of animal and zoonotic disease prevention and control measures. Agencies and entities responsible for major aspects of companion animal and zoonotic diseases:

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Increase opportunities for animal health data collection. Congress should fund and facilitate enhanced opportunities for collaboration between state and federal agencies (e.g., CDC, DDCI, and USDA). The Secretary of Homeland Security, in NPPS, should build on the National Animal Health Emergency Plan and the National Animal Health Policy, and include the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) as a key element of these plans, along with enhanced funding for the NAHLN and its associated services.
2. Fund the National Animal Health Laboratory Network at a level that allows it to achieve success. The Administration should request and Congress should fund the NAHLN at an accelerated level.
3. Develop guidance for the serious infections of companion animal and wildlife diseases. The Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) and the Director of the National Institute of Veterinary Research (NIVR) should develop guidance for serious, zoonotic infections, such as those that pose a companion animal threat in the event of a major zoonotic disease outbreak. State, local, and territorial health departments should develop guidance for these infections. Congress should support this effort by establishing a Companion Animal and Zoonotic Disease Assessment Act to require the Administrator of FEMA to ensure that state, local, territorial, and tribal governments develop plans to respond to and contain these threats. The Department of Homeland Security should support this effort.

II. SUPPORTING EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Emergency Services Sector is a critical infrastructure sector that is the Nation's first line of defense for preventing, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from incidents of many kinds, including biological threats. This sector consists of law enforcement, fire and emergency

services, emergency management, emergency medical services, and public works. It is the sector responsible for the protection of the 15 other critical infrastructure sectors as defined by DHS.⁶⁴ While not included in the DHS definition, public health responders also provide critical emergency services following a biological threat. All of these responders are ready at any time to deal with an extraordinary number of potential incidents. While DHS, HHS, and other agencies have done good work to equip and train responders to address biological threats, gaps remain.

MEDICAL COUNTERMEASURES AND OTHER PROTECTIVE MEASURES FOR FIRST RESPONDERS NEEDED

Emergency services providers are subject to a disproportionate threat because they work in the midst of disasters.⁶⁵ Research demonstrates that communities will be at a disadvantage during a biological crisis if essential response personnel feel that they or their families are insufficiently protected.⁶⁶ For example, only 20 percent of paramedics in one survey said they would remain on duty without a vaccine and protective gear – a number that rose to 91 percent if these protections were provided.⁶⁷

Any material threat to homeland security is a threat not just to the general population, but also to the responders who will serve them.⁶⁸ After an MTD was issued for anthrax, and because a vaccine was available in surplus, discussions began about whether this vaccine should be offered to first responders. Short-dated, surplus anthrax vaccine doses owned by the federal government expire by the hundreds of thousands each month and are discarded. A voluntary vaccination program for anthrax or other threats for which vaccines are available could boost preparedness and has had significant bipartisan support in Congress.⁶⁹ DHS has been formulating a pilot program to provide anthrax vaccine to emergency services providers for more than half a decade. In 2015, due to bureaucratic delays and inability to establish the needed occupational health system to administer such a program, there is still no program that provides this minimal protection to the protectors.

In addition to vaccines, the government could make available other MCM to emergency services providers. The CDC conducted a pilot in St. Louis, Missouri in 2005 to pre-position antibiotic kits (known as medkits) in the homes of emergency service providers. The goal was to provide protection for these responders and their families in the event of an emergency. The pilot was considered a success and demonstrated that these professionals could manage the kits without misusing them. Similar pilots with the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) proved the same. To date, these initiatives have not been implemented as programs, in part because some public health officials remain concerned about misuse. Although an FDA Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) or other means of temporarily eliminating regulatory hurdles would be required for medkits, the pilots demonstrate this can be done.

Non-pharmaceutical interventions are just as important. Recommendations regarding the type and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect against biological events are available, and range from gloves and masks to military-grade protective over-garments. Most responders only possess the PPE necessary to operate within current community environments and only after decades of experiences with HIV and influenza. Specific standards or guidelines for PPE are still needed, and their development will require special attention to unique requirements of the various emergency services subsectors.⁷⁰

Recommendation 15

Provide emergency services providers with the resources they need to keep themselves and their families safe. This will allow them to better protect their communities from all threats, including those that threaten the well-being of individuals and property.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Provide vaccines to responders who request them. The Secretary of Homeland Security can issue an order for the DHS to begin to provide emergency services providers with the vaccines they need to keep themselves and their families safe. This will allow them to better protect their communities from all threats, including those that threaten the well-being of individuals and property.
2. Provide additional counterterrorism services providers and their families. The Director of the CIO, the Comptroller of the DIA, and the ASPR should make plans to increase the availability of the counterterrorism services providers and their families, and to develop additional programs to serve them.
3. Establish reasonable personnel protection requirements, guidelines, and requirements in advance of a biological event. The Office of the DNI and Human Services should collaborate with the Office of National Intelligence to establish reasonable and requirements for health and medical personnel. The ONS should also establish reasonable and requirements for law enforcement personnel. The ONS should also establish reasonable and requirements for medical personnel.

THREAT INFORMATION INSUFFICIENTLY SHARED WITH EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency service providers might be able to better target their efforts to address biological threats and protect themselves if they had more information regarding the threat, relevant vulnerabilities, and potential consequences.⁷¹ Yet much of the available information about current and potential biological threats is often classified. Recognizing this, the IC has attempted to declassify at least some of this information and provide it to non-federal governmental entities. For example, state, local, territorial, and tribal first responders and public safety professionals, as well as federal intelligence analysts from the National Counterterrorism Center, DHS, and FBI, are members of the Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team (JCAT, resident in the Office of the DNI). The team strives to jointly research, produce, and disseminate counterterrorism intelligence to non-federal governmental entities.⁷² Still, the federal government has found it difficult to overcome institutional prohibitions against sharing information with non-federal personnel. As a result, these programs do not function as originally intended.

Partly to solve this problem, some local police entities have developed their own intelligence function, allowing them to develop intelligence and distribute information to others within their locality. While police departments continue to develop and implement their own intelligence programs in various areas, these programs are far from ubiquitous and only address the biological threat in small part.

Recommendation 16

Recommendation 16: *Redouble efforts to share information with state, local, territorial, and tribal partners. The DDCI should provide a regular update to state, local, territorial, and tribal partners on the status of the DDCI's countermeasures, including the threat assessment, and coordinate closely with the DDCI to ensure that the DDCI's countermeasures are consistent with the intelligence mission.*

ACTION ITEMS:

1. **Strengthen the Joint Countermeasures Assessment Team.** The DDCI should expand the joint countermeasures assessment team to include additional members with specialized expertise in the areas of medical countermeasures, pharmaceuticals, and medical devices. The DDCI should expand the joint countermeasures assessment team to include members from the medical countermeasures, pharmaceuticals, and medical devices community. The DDCI should also designate an authority for the program.
2. **Strengthen the ability of local police intelligence units to address bioterrorism threat.** The Attorney General should work with the FBI and other law enforcement agencies to enhance the ability of local police intelligence units to address bioterrorism threat.
3. **Ensure bioterrorism readiness by biological threat.** The Administrator of FEMA and the DHS should consider the need to maintain a minimum level of personnel and resources for a range of potential threats, including biological, chemical, and radiological.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SUPPORT FOR LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO WANE

Infectious diseases impact national security and easily cross borders. Federal support for state, local, territorial, and tribal public health emergency preparedness is, therefore, a reasonable use of taxpayer dollars. The CDC's Public Health and Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) cooperative agreements are the primary avenue by which federal funding reaches state, local, territorial, and tribal health departments to support public health emergency preparedness. More than \$10 billion has reached 62 PHEP jurisdictions since the program began in 2002.⁷³

PHEP funds support activities such as the purchase of electronic disease surveillance systems, establishment of local emergency operations centers, expansion of laboratory infrastructure, hiring of epidemiologists and laboratorians, and training of employees in emergency response protocols. Although the bioterror threat has grown since 2002, the funding to address the potential impact of that threat through PHEP activity has declined relentlessly since its initiation (due to both decreased Presidential budget requests and reduced congressional appropriations). Since a high of \$940 million in FY 2002, the last appropriation (FY 2015) was \$661 million. The FY2016 request would further reduce that amount to \$643.6 million.

Administrations have touted the success of the program while simultaneously scaling back their budget requests. Some federal grant programs have been grounded in the notion that the grants may be used to establish capabilities, at which point grantees can transition the funding responsibility for maintaining those capabilities to themselves. This is not a reasonable

concept for public health emergency preparedness. State, local, territorial, and tribal health budgets have been decimated since the financial crisis of 2008. Withholding dedicated emergency preparedness funds may preserve federal bottom lines, but it further diminishes national preparedness.

Recommendation 17

Find the Public Health Emergency Preparedness cooperative agreement at no less than authorized levels to ensure that state and local governments have the resources and capacity to respond to a public health emergency.

ACTION ITEM:

- Appropriations Public Health Emergency Preparedness funding to authorized levels or the President's request, whichever is higher. Congress authorized \$645 million over 5 years from 2003 to 2007. Cooperative agreements at a funding level no less than those in 2003 are sufficient to maintain a robust national preparedness response for influenza. More importantly, the Administration and Congress should ensure that emergency funds for other disasters are provided in a timely manner, and the emergency funds available are not only for emergency preparedness but also for other disaster response.

III. CREATING INCENTIVES FOR HOSPITAL PREPAREDNESS

Hospitals have received varying levels of support to prepare for biological events, especially bioterrorism and pandemic influenza. Prior to the establishment of the HHS Hospital Preparedness Program (HPP) in 2002, hospitals undertook preparedness activities,⁷⁵ but without dedicated federal funding. Since its inception, the HPP has been a small component of overall spending on hospital preparedness. While the HPP expanded in 2012 to include all healthcare facilities, funding was reduced to \$250 million from an original appropriation of \$645 million in 2003. OSHA has issued guidance for decades, and the Joint Commission (previously the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations), Det Norske Veritas, Health Facilities Accreditation Program, and Center for Improvement in Healthcare Quality – all healthcare accrediting agencies – have introduced preparedness criteria into their accreditation requirements. Additionally, hospitals have attempted to address preparedness for bioterrorism and other infectious disease events as part of their overall disaster preparedness.⁷⁶ Certain requirements associated with highly infectious diseases and low frequency biological events fit well within hospital disaster preparedness frameworks designed to address earthquakes, hurricanes, and other disasters, but other requirements do not.

HOSPITAL INFECTION CONTROL CHALLENGED BY EBOLA

During the Ebola outbreak of 2014, it became clear that hospital preparedness varied widely. A few hospitals were well prepared to serve as treatment centers for infected patients, but the vast majority of others were completely unprepared and struggled to catch up. Historically, OSHA has developed and issued PPE guidelines to hospitals, but in a sudden turn, the CDC did so regarding Ebola and without working with or adequately consulting OSHA. As a result, the guidelines initially issued by CDC were insufficient to meet the needs of hospitals. Flawed guidelines released by the CDC to hospitals (which addressed issues not under CDC purview, such as PPE and hospital operations), inadequate coordination between CDC and OSHA regarding federal messaging and waste management, poor training regarding the implementation of the requirements described in those guidelines, and insufficient attention paid to some potentially useful hospital disaster plans exacerbated already insufficient levels of preparedness. The prior operating assumption – that all healthcare facilities should prepare to manage patients instead of proposing a system for identification and transfer to special treatment locations – led to overwhelming resource and training requirements during the Ebola crisis. Although many hospitals became far more proficient and capable of handling Ebola patients, the passage of time since the last Ebola case and the lack of additional patients coming to the United States make it unlikely that the same level of serious infectious disease-specific proficiency will be maintained.

Recommendation 18

Establish and utilize a standard process to develop and issue clinical infection control guidance for biological events. In order to ensure the steps in which federal agencies issue guidelines in the event of a crisis, both the CDC and OSHA have established committees to issue separate, more specific and written-based guidance to develop and issue clinical guidance prior to the onset of the next outbreak.

ACTION ITEMS:

- a. Standardize the development of clinical infection control guidelines before biological events occur. Congress should direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Labor to implement a process through which the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Labor will develop clinical guidelines for treatment, infection control, use of PPE, waste management, and other activities needed in the hospital setting. The Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Labor should direct the CDC and OSHA, respectively, to identify specific steps within this process and make the description of that process readily and publicly available in advance of an biological event.

- b. Institute a process for obtaining and incorporating feedback regarding clinical infection control guidelines during biological events. During events occurring in the United States, the Vice President should direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Homeland Security to issue recommendations for revised clinical infection control guidelines. These guidelines should be distributed to medical facilities, public health authorities, and individuals involved in medical and public health activities. The Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Homeland Security should periodically evaluate and update these guidelines. **10/20/2012**
- c. Require training based on these guidelines. The Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Homeland Security should periodically evaluate and update training requirements for these guidelines. **10/20/2012**

OPTIMIZING HOSPITAL PREPAREDNESS FUNDING

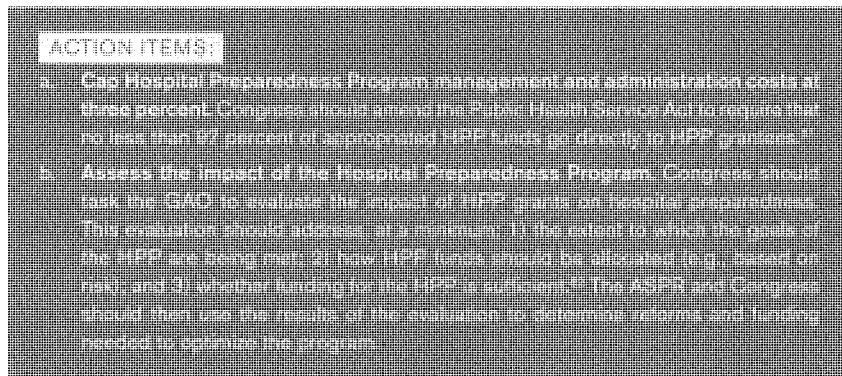
Federal funding for hospital preparedness⁷⁷ represents approximately 1/100th of one percent of the Nation's total healthcare spending.⁷⁸ This relatively small amount of money, coupled with the need to coordinate across health care systems and communities, drove the development of hospital coalitions. Still, hospital coalitions have been unable to make up for insufficient funding.

In response to the Ebola events, HHS provided grants through HPP designed to help hospitals become more proficient in addressing Ebola.⁷⁹ The funding represents less than 12 cents per American over five years. As important as Ebola-related hospital preparedness funding has been, disease-specific funding is the most inefficient, costly manner in which to fund preparedness for biological events. Politically, reacting in this manner is an understandable result of needing to take some action. Practically, this reaction is unsustainable and it is unclear how much of a contribution disease-specific hospital preparedness grants will make to overall hospital preparedness.

The HPP has experienced progressively reduced funding, with the exception of the recent limited increases associated with Ebola. Further reducing the amount of HPP funding available, the ASPR routinely keeps back 7-10 percent of the grant funds for administrative expenses, despite its receiving dedicated appropriations to fund its own operations.⁸⁰ No more than three percent of funds should go toward management and administration. The HPP has never received the full support it needs from Congress or presidential administrations since its inception. In order to determine how much HPP funding is necessary to ensure hospitals are prepared for biological and other events, a thorough evaluation of the costs, successes, and failures of the HPP is called for.

Recommendation 19

- Minimize reduction of Hospital Preparedness Program funds.** The Vice President and the Secretary of Homeland Security should direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to issue recommendations for revised clinical infection control guidelines. These guidelines should be distributed to medical facilities, public health authorities, and individuals involved in medical and public health activities. The Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Homeland Security should periodically evaluate and update these guidelines. **10/20/2012**



FUNDING ASSOCIATED WITH ACCREDITATION

Hospitals also qualify for funding via the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) at HHS by fulfilling accreditation requirements for various specialties. Accreditation is a critical node in this complicated system that attempts to link performance to payment. However, preparedness for bioterrorism and other deadly infectious disease events has not been incorporated into either hospital accreditation or funding requirements arising out of CMS.⁸³

Healthcare accrediting agencies are aware of the need for preparedness and have issued planning guidelines to address it. Joint Commission leadership has testified before Congress and others on the need to prepare for bioterrorism and other exigent circumstances. However, these deeming entities have not issued standards specific to bioterrorism preparedness or preparedness for highly infectious diseases. Instead, for example, the Joint Commission includes such biological events as one among many hazards included in the term all-hazards and requires an all-hazards emergency management plan, hazard vulnerability self-assessments, familiarity with the Incident Command System, and exercising of plans. During Joint Commission visits, assessors evaluate the plan and how well trained staff are for all hazards. The goal of this approach is to develop and maintain a strong foundation upon which all hazards – including bioterrorism and highly infectious disease events – can be managed well.⁸⁴ Opportunities exist as part of health delivery reform to improve hospital preparedness for disasters and biological threats, including through the application of the ASPR National Healthcare Preparedness Guidelines.⁸⁵ If bioterror preparedness were also made an accreditation requirement, the potential for increased CMS funding – far greater than that available via the HPP – should provide a strong financial incentive for hospitals to prepare for biological events.

Recommendation 20

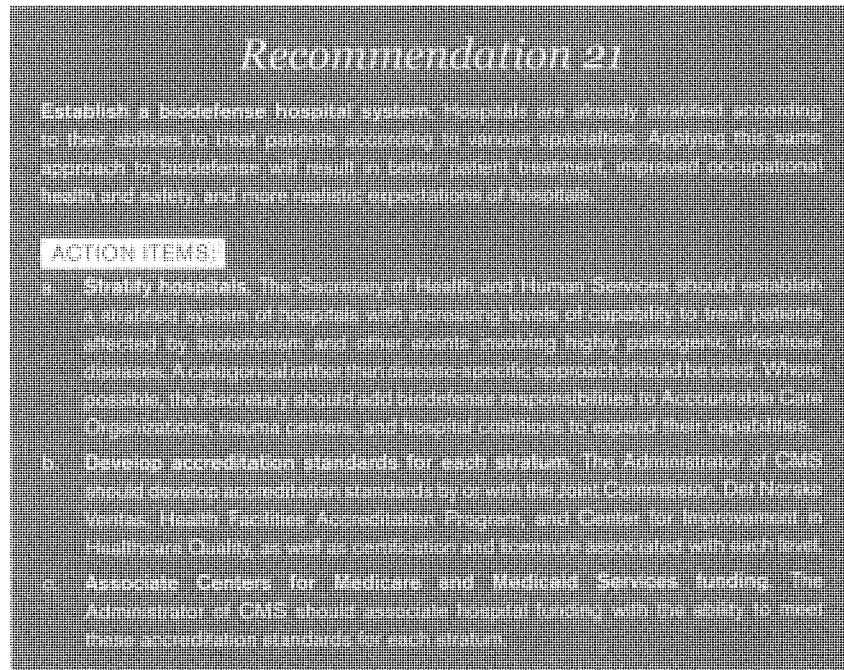
ACTION ITEMS:

- a. **Adopt a disaster preparedness portfolio.** The Administration of CMS, in conjunction with ACHC, should assess the effectiveness of the National Quality Forum and determine what part of its health delivery reform efforts is a disaster preparedness portfolio that includes Conditions of Participation, the revised Classification of Ambulatory Health Care Services, and the Health Care Quality Improvement Program. The portfolio should include a risk-based purchasing and payment portfolio. Preparedness measures are available for inclusion in the upcoming Patient Centered Medical Home Payment System program and the community, regional and national resources to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness.
- b. **Link Coopers for Medicare and Medicaid Services incentives and encouragement to meet accreditation standards.** Congress should enhance CMS's authority and funding for those hospitals that meet these new accreditation standards for participation in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

NEED FOR A FORMALIZED STRATIFIED HOSPITAL SYSTEM

It is not necessary or prudent for every hospital in the United States to possess and maintain the same capability for treating patients affected by intentionally introduced and naturally occurring biological events.⁶⁶ Ebola demonstrated that this is an unrealistic expectation, prompting the CDC to introduce a three-tiered system to more strategically allocate resources and response efforts.⁶⁷ Today, Ebola patients can be treated at a hospital among the tiers deemed capable of providing necessary care in properly controlled environments, assuring the safety of the patient, health care workers, and anyone within and surrounding these hospitals.

A stratified hospital system similar to that utilized for Ebola and other specialized pathologies (e.g., trauma, stroke, cardiac care, burns, pediatrics) is needed for infectious diseases. Such a system would require all hospitals to attain the ability to assess patients in order to recognize bioterror agents, as well as emerging and reemerging infectious diseases. All hospitals would also be able to stabilize patients within 48 hours, and then refer patients quickly to higher-level hospitals for more definitive care. Other levels of hospitals would be able to provide increasingly specialized care, depending on the status of these patients. Biodefense responsibilities could also be added to Accountable Care Organizations, trauma centers, and hospital coalitions. Ebola funding available via the HPP can help establish this system, but more must be done to formalize it and increase its functionality. This could include exploration of reimbursement enhancements via the previously mentioned specialties.



IV. ADVANCING PLANNING FOR MEDICAL COUNTERMEASURE DISTRIBUTION AND DISPENSING

The CDC manages the SNS, a cache of pharmaceuticals, medical supplies, and equipment stored to protect the American public in the event of a major chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) incident severe enough to strain local resources. The MCM contained therein are only as good as our ability to provide them in a timely way to the people who need them. The CDC and a number of its federal, non-federal government, and private sector partners have worked hard to develop plans for distributing and dispensing SNS contents to the locales that need them. PHEP agreements require exercises toward these ends. Many experts, however, are unconvinced that SNS contents can reach massive numbers of people in the short time in which they are required (as few as 48 hours for certain infectious diseases).

NATIONAL MASS PROPHYLAXIS MUST DEPEND ON NON-FEDERAL INPUT, PLANNING, AND IMPLEMENTATION

The current distribution and dispensing system is insufficient and unacceptable. The likelihood that needed MCM could reach individuals in short timeframes on a mass scale is still not a reality. One study found as recently as 2012 that the MCM response architecture lacks clear, centralized leadership; clear and consistent directives for and coordination of state, local, territorial, and tribal

government plans; clear goals and objectives for response; sufficient imagination to consider alternative scenarios such as repeat or simultaneous attacks; and sufficient funding for health departments.⁸⁸ These remain unresolved problems. Additionally, certain logistical questions (e.g., how long it will take to break down pallets, how long until multi-dosage medications are resupplied) have not yet been addressed and are a concern for most localities.

A now-defunct program would have leveraged the delivery capacity of the USPS to deliver MCM to residences. Pilot programs showed a willingness on the part of certain locales and volunteer postal carriers to carry out this task. They also demonstrated that such a USPS delivery plan is highly complex, requiring hundreds of potential routes to be served; an enormous drain on law enforcement resources (a sworn officer would be required to chaperone each carrier); and dependent on high levels of training and exercising, as well as sustained, annual federal funding.

While some cities could benefit from this approach, an optimal national mass prophylaxis capability will have to reach far beyond the USPS and into private delivery companies, pharmaceutical chains, and volunteer healthcare worker coalitions. Various modalities (e.g., distribution by large employers, regional pharmacies, healthcare facilities, non-governmental organizations) have often been discussed, but our primary dependence still remains on the static open point of dispensing (POD) model, which cannot alone meet the need.⁸⁹

Unresolved issues in the distribution and dispensing of MCM must be addressed. The Nation lacks a workable national MCM distribution system that can be activated quickly and counted upon to work in an emergency. One reason for this is that a national, stakeholder-driven MCM response framework is missing; such a framework would provide structure and guidance for local planning efforts. MCM distribution from the cache sites to local destinations is often addressed in federal hazard planning documents intended for use by local jurisdictions that do not adopt them, frequently because they are not really at the table during their development. It remains unclear how regional distribution and local dispensing operations can best be coordinated among federal, state, local, territorial, tribal, private sector, and nongovernmental partners. The federal government needs to assist PHEP grantees with integrating performance measures, processes, shared services, roles and responsibilities, technologies, and resources needed to implement a truly functional distribution and dispensing architecture for MCM into their plans.

In order for any distribution and dispensing plan to be successful, the CDC must issue clinical utilization guidance for the MCMs in the stockpile. Such guidance helps local health officials understand who should get which vaccine or treatment, which diseases they should screen for prior to dispensing, and who is at risk for complications. The CDC has delayed issuing clinical guidance for years in some cases. If an outbreak were to occur tomorrow, even if the assets were already in place, health officials would not necessarily know how to allocate them. This is a special concern for vulnerable populations (e.g., children, elderly, immunocompromised) who require guidance specific to their status. The Vice President should hold the CDC accountable for this extremely important component of MCM planning.

Recommendation 22

Development and Implementation of National Chemical-Medical Emergency Response Framework. A national, stakeholder-driven framework for chemical-medicinal emergency response is needed. MCM response will proceed more effectively and efficiently if it is based on a national framework that can be tailored to specific circumstances.

ACTION ITEM:

- Produce a comprehensive framework to guide medical countermeasure distribution and dispensing planning. Together with technical partners, the ASPPR, the Director of the CDC, and the Administrator of FEMA should identify, evaluate, and select the most effective methods for distribution, classification, and dispensing of MCM in medical sites. This framework should include the theory, development, and design of a medical countermeasure distribution and dispensing system that is capable of providing a medical countermeasure to a patient within 48 hours. It should also include the identification of the most effective methods for distribution, classification, and dispensing of MCM in medical sites. This framework should include the theory, development, and design of a medical countermeasure distribution and dispensing system that is capable of providing a medical countermeasure to a patient within 48 hours. It should also include the identification of the most effective methods for distribution, classification, and dispensing of MCM in medical sites. This framework should include the theory, development, and design of a medical countermeasure distribution and dispensing system that is capable of providing a medical countermeasure to a patient within 48 hours. It should also include the identification of the most effective methods for distribution, classification, and dispensing of MCM in medical sites. This framework should include the theory, development, and design of a medical countermeasure distribution and dispensing system that is capable of providing a medical countermeasure to a patient within 48 hours.

LACK OF MCM PLANNING PREVENTS FORWARD DEPLOYMENT OF THE SNS

While planning for the challenges described above can be resolved in the medium term with the advent of the framework called for in Recommendation 22, the CDC can institute near-term change in advance of that. Some localities have worked hard to demonstrate their ability to quickly and responsibly take charge of MCM distribution and dispensing. For example, New York City is now so well practiced in setting up PODs that responders would be ready to serve their populace hours before CDC assets even arrive. The CDC, however, has thus far been as unwilling to forward deploy assets to qualified cities. Given that the United States is already behind in developing a fully functional system for the distribution and dispensing of MCM, the government should support forward deployments to jurisdictions that prove themselves capable of handling SNS contents and dispensing them efficiently.

Recommendation 23

Forward deployment of medical countermeasures should be a key element of the SNS. The SNS should be forward-deployed to areas that have demonstrated the ability to appropriately handle SNS contents, or quickly transition to that ability.

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Determine resources and funding needs.** The Director of the CDC should determine the resources, personnel, equipment, and funding requirements for forward-deploying SNS assets.
- **Implement forward deployments.** Once the requirements are established, the Director should request funding in the next budget cycle to support forward deployments to areas that have demonstrated readiness. Deployments of medical countermeasures should be limited to high-risk, high-density urban areas that have demonstrated the ability to stand up PODs faster than 48 hours, or can be converted to those assets during and without difficulty converted to PODs. The Director of CDC should actively encourage leaders of other major urban areas to demonstrate their ability to stand up PODs faster than SNS medications can currently be distributed.

Recommendation 23

Allow for forward deployment of Strategic National Stockpile assets. The department should establish a stockpile management system that accommodates forward deployment of the Strategic National Stockpile assets. This would facilitate a more rapid response.

ACTION ITEMS

- a. **Dissemination logistics and funding needs.** The distribution of the GHS should disseminate the necessary assessment, mitigation, and funding requirements to forward-looking SIDS societies.
- b. **Implementation forward developments.** Dissemination and implementation of the GHS should include funding in the next budget cycle to support forward developments to other developing countries and regions. Priority should be given to developing countries and regions in high-risk, high-exposure areas where there are no institutional capacity and low GHS funding from SIDS societies, and the case for commitment to invest, operationalize and subsequently implement the GHS. The GHS should aim to encourage uptake by countries of other sectoral mechanisms that can further enhance the ability of countries to implement their SIDS responsibilities and contribute to global climate.

V. DEALING WITH CYBER THREATS TO PATHOGEN SECURITY

Despite the overwhelming benefits that digital information technologies bring to biodefense, they simultaneously create portals for malicious intent.⁹⁰ The FBI, other federal departments and agencies, and the private sector are working to address vulnerabilities where biology meets cyberspace. But the work is nascent, and the United States is not yet well positioned to address cyber threats that affect the biological science and technology sectors.

Senator Sheldon Whitehouse told the Panel, "There is a considerable bank of information on biological warfare dating back to the biological warfare planning of the United States and the Soviet Union fifty years ago...Unlike a nuclear warhead, that information can travel very readily, and in the hands of terrorists or others who wish us harm, it can be very dangerous. So how do we control the proliferation of that bank of information our countries built back in those days?"⁹¹ Not only does this historical information still pose a risk, but so does the body of knowledge about pathogens that has expanded since that time. In the modern day, the sharing of data via cloud computing, the growth of big data in the life sciences, and private and/or government networks that contain biotechnology know-how and/or pathogen information are a particular risk.

While a cyber attack on any health-related system could have enormous consequences to health security and care delivery, an area of particular relevance to biodefense and biosecurity is the vulnerability of pathogen-related data. Such information is commonly shared via the cloud or non-secure networks during the course of scientific business. Genetic sequences of pathogens (including those of the most serious threat agents) may be shared. The databases that contain this kind of information are as vulnerable to hacking as any other, and adversaries could

use their contents to gather intelligence on U.S. defensive capabilities, or even to engineer bioweapons. Life sciences research is also pushing further into big data analytics, a method by which enormous amounts of data are captured, integrated, and analyzed to reveal trends. The storage of any huge datasets, whether in the cloud or on secure servers, allows for scientific advancements, but also creates enormous vulnerabilities, as made clear in 2014-2015 with several attacks on health insurance provider databases.^{92,93}

Additionally, biotechnology companies, universities, and government research laboratories store large amounts of networked information on biotechnology. This information includes advanced methods for genetic engineering, bio-manufacturing technologies, and emerging trends in biomedicine. These databases are targets for intellectual property crimes, industrial espionage, and intelligence gathering. Should these biotechnology databases fall into the wrong hands, rogue nations or other malefactors could use them to accelerate their biological terrorism and weapons programs.

Theft, misuse, or tampering with pathogen data should be considered a national security matter. If cloud-based data sharing, storage, and analysis are to be used for disease research, detection, and characterization, technical and non-technical security measures must be developed and implemented to ensure that no data stored or shared in the cloud are inappropriately manipulated or destroyed. A strategy for sharing information regarding cyber threats, securing pathogen data, and preventing national security breaches is needed. In addition, pursuant to President Obama's Executive Order on cybersecurity,⁹⁴ the federal government is in the midst of integrating cybersecurity risk assessments and obligations into all of its procurements. Federally-supported pathogen research projects, however, have not yet been included in that revised procurement model. Any time federal dollars are to be spent on pathogen and MCM research, cybersecurity concerns must factor into funding awards, and addressing these concerns should constitute an obligation for the funding recipients, much in the way select agent researchers are already obligated to comply with Select Agent Program (SAP) security regulations. The additional adoption of more stringent voluntary measures on the part of researchers should be encouraged and rewarded.

Recommendation 24

Harden pathogen and advanced biotechnology information from cyber attacks. The U.S. government must develop and implement security measures to protect pathogen and biotechnology information from cyber attacks.

ACTION ITEMS:

- 1 Develop and implement a security strategy for stored pathogen data. The Vice President must ensure that the security of pathogen information is addressed by existing U.S. cybersecurity strategy and policy, including placed in accordance with existing and emerging international obligations. Any national cybersecurity strategy must include the protection of pathogen data and the use of that data for individual and national security purposes. This strategy must also include the protection of the data and the data's associated intellectual property.

- iii. Provide the research community with tools and incentives to secure its data. Federal departments and agencies should develop formally designated postdoctoral researchers to maintain the required data in official records under classification. They should also consider developing a system to automatically track these data within the framework of the research community. The Director of National Intelligence, the Secretary of Defense, and the Director, Science and Technology, should maintain the classification of records and information. The Director of National Intelligence should also maintain the classification of records and information for the intelligence community.
- iv. Develop cyber-threat information-sharing mechanisms for the pathogen and advanced biotechnology communities. The Vice President should have the ability to coordinate with the Director of National Intelligence, the Secretary of Defense, and the Director of the National Security Agency to develop a system to share information on cyber-threats. The Director of National Intelligence and the Director of the National Security Agency should also coordinate with the Director of the Defense Science and Technology Graduate School and the Defense Science and Technology Graduate School to develop a system to share information on cyber-threats.

VI. REENGAGING WITH THE BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS CONVENTION

The BWC is a legally binding treaty that entered into force in 1975. Signatory nations agree to never "develop, produce, stockpile or otherwise acquire or retain microbial or other biological agents or toxins whatever their origin or method of production, of types and in quantities that have no justification for prophylactic, protective or other peaceful purposes."⁹⁶ To date, 173 nations have become parties to the convention,⁹⁷ but at least five of these countries (China, Iran, North Korea, Russia, and Syria) are suspected of engaging in biological weapons activities despite BWC ratification.⁹⁸

The BWC does not absolutely prohibit the use of biological agents or toxins, but instead prohibits their use as or in biological weapons. The BWC allows these agents and toxins to be used for peaceful purposes, including research and the development of MCM, protective equipment, and detection systems. Such peaceful work can cross the line into offensive work, and a well-known shortcoming of the BWC is that it lacks a verification system to sufficiently restrain countries from engaging in offensive biological weapons programs.

The United States has not been satisfied with any previously proposed verification and compliance (including sentencing) protocols because they neither adequately or realistically address prohibited activities nor allow for clear judgments on compliance to be made. The serious concerns about the development of an unsuitable verification regime caused the United States to withdraw from the fifth review conference in 2001, which threatened the viability of the BWC. The United States did rejoin the review conference when it resumed in 2002, but continues to harbor reservations about verification and compliance with the Convention.⁹⁹

Despite concerns about BWC implementation, the United States remains a signatory to the BWC and continues to participate in BWC review conferences that occur every five years and annual Meeting of States Parties and Expert Meetings. Given their experience with the 2001 review conference, member nations tread lightly on the topic of verification and compliance, while hoping that such a regime can and will be developed eventually. When the United States withheld support of the verification protocol put forward in 2001, it left a leadership void that has never been filled adequately since.

Recommendation 25

Renew U.S. leadership of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. Given the leadership role the United States has had in the development of the BWC, the United States should take a leadership role in the development of a verification protocol. The United States should offer leadership, working with verification of compliance, and enforcement of the BWC, to develop a verification protocol that is acceptable to the international community and is adopted by the treaty.

ACTION ITEMS:

- a. **Continue to strengthen implementation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention where U.S. support is unequivocal.** The Secretary of State should insist U.S. support for the BWC by addressing protocol on verification of compliance and enforcement of compliance, which is the most important element of the BWC. All U.S. federal agencies should assist federal agencies in developing such a verification protocol.
- b. **Set U.S. goals for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and determine the conditions necessary to achieve them.** The Vice President should direct the NSC to use the period leading up to the December 2001 BWC review conference to determine specific outcomes. The Secretary of State should employ a diplomatic strategy to agree these issues with other parties to the treaty in advance of the next review conference.
- c. **Develop three actionable recommendations for Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention verification.** Prior to the next BWC review conference, the Vice President and the Secretary of State should continue to work with other BWC member states to develop three recommendations for biological and toxin weapons verification that are acceptable to the BWC. The recommendations should include the development of three verification protocols that are specific to biological and toxin weapons that would meet U.S. national security needs as well as state-level compliance.
- d. **Establish broader biological weapons sentencing guidelines in statute.** Congress should amend the Biological Weapons Anti-Terrorism Act of 1998 and the USA PATRIOT Act to include more severe sentencing guidelines taking into account the real and growing possibility that biological weapons will be used in the United States.

VII. BUILDING UPON DEFENSE SUPPORT TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES

DOD possesses resources and expertise that would be applicable in certain civilian contexts. Recognizing this, DOD has established some doctrine in support of civil authorities.¹⁰² U.S. Northern Command has taken on a number of responsibilities for providing support to civil authorities and in executing those responsibilities, and has managed to foster some of the military-civilian collaboration needed for biodefense. Collaborative biodefense efforts (e.g., biosurveillance, pandemic planning) for the most part, however, are not formalized and there are no clear measures in place to ensure that they will be sustained. Additionally, these efforts do not reach far enough to address the needs of the entire Nation for biodefense.

Despite the importance of DOD's role in providing support to civilian authorities in response to domestic bioincidents, doctrinal clarity for this role is lacking. DOD has not established strong interfaces with the federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal agencies that would be involved in responding to a major biological attack against the United States. Should an event occur, while many suggest that the military should be called upon to assist civilians, there are no clear policies for the integration of military assets and the delegation of decisions to DOD decision-makers and the National Command Authority (NCA) that might be required.

DOD has significant knowledge that it could transfer to the civilian sector in the way of planning, logistics, response, operating in contaminated environments, science, technology, and many other matters. DOD and its civilian counterparts should engage in continuous transfers and exchanges of information to strengthen biodefense and the ability of the civilian sector to pull its own weight in a large-scale biological event – especially if military and other DOD personnel are called away to defend the Nation overseas.

DOD force protection and projection are imperiled by the threat of both bioweapons and naturally occurring infectious diseases. Yet U.S. warfighter preparedness for and protection against biological attacks is inadequate. DOD assets and force readiness overseas and within the homeland could be dangerously compromised by a major biological event. Scant consideration has been given to how operations would be conducted in biologically contaminated environments caused by a biological attack or by exposure to infectious disease when engaging in combat or providing humanitarian assistance.

Current military biodefense doctrine and policy falls short of adequately protecting the warfighter and ensuring that military operations continue unimpeded. Civilian policy also falls short of adequately protecting first responders and ensuring their activities continue unimpeded. Both civilian and military operators share many similar requirements for protection in biologically contaminated environments. However, mechanisms to encourage and develop collaboration between these communities are weak and are in need of greater support by both public and private sector leaders.

Recommendation 26

Enhanced military-civilian collaboration for biodefense. Ongoing governmental and intergovernmental programs should benefit from the increased collaboration and communication possible among the U.S. military, civilian science, and industry stakeholders.

ACTION ITEMS:

- a. **Conduct a review of military-civilian collaborative efforts.** The Secretary of Defense should conduct a review of military and civilian efforts to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of the military and civilian biodefense collaboration. The Secretary of Defense should develop a formalized framework for collaboration that includes the development of a biodefense interagency task force, a formalized communication mechanism, and a formalized mechanism for reporting progress and outcomes. The review should include the need for creating, implementing, and continually updating a formalized program for ongoing military-civilian collaboration and the need for a formalized mechanism to track the results of the program. The Department of Defense and the Department of Health and Human Services should be involved in this process.
- b. **Establish military-civilian biodefense collaboration.** Congress should enhance military-civilian collaboration on biodefense (including research regarding forces protection). Contracts should include clear requirements for reporting and sharing information between the Defense Science and Technology Agency and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- c. **Clarify personnel and military support for civilian authorities in response to a domestic biological attack.** The Secretary of Defense should clarify military personnel authority to respond to a domestic biological attack. Clear personnel authority should be established and fully implemented to allow military personnel to respond to a domestic biological attack. The Vice President and the National Security Advisor should be included in the planning and decision-making process to be designated to be the lead authority for the use of military personnel to respond to a domestic biological attack.
- d. **Update and implement military biodefense doctrine.** DOD must produce technically feasible and politically acceptable doctrine for biodefense protection. It must be built to priority mission authorities for forces protection and preparedness. The Secretary of Defense should be held accountable by the Vice President for ensuring that the doctrine is built to the highest standards and for disseminating such doctrine and policies to the military. Congress should support DOD's efforts to update and implement military biodefense doctrine.

CHAPTER 3: THE NEED FOR LEADERSHIP IN DRIVING INNOVATION

Governments are not known for taking innovative approaches to managing problems or to seeking high risk/high payoff scientific and technological solutions. The public sector has traditionally discouraged this kind of creative and cutting-edge thinking, in contrast to the private sector, which thrives on it.¹⁰³

Scientific discovery is inherently fraught with uncertainty and policymakers have difficulty making enormous investments that may or may not result in viable scientific and technological solutions.¹⁰⁴ Innovation usually involves investment risk which, in turn, challenges policy makers. This is especially true with regard to low probability/high consequence events and in the absence of immediate threats.

It is reasonable for federal agencies to approach their missions with deliberation and well-established solutions. However, some problems call for greater urgency and innovation – because they are imminent threats, because the vulnerabilities underlying them have existed for too long, or because their complexity requires equally complex solutions. Biodefense falls into each of these categories. A problem like defending a nation from biological threats is inherently difficult to solve because it consists of overlapping subsets of problems, is addressed by diverse stakeholders with distinct agendas, and attracts problem solvers from a variety of organizations with different values – characteristics that can impede even a definitive statement of the problem.¹⁰⁵

These complex problems require extraordinary coordination and collaboration, as well as innovative solutions. The government must be innovative in the very way it organizes to solve the problem (e.g., establishing agile and flexible procurement processes) and in developing requirements for the technologies it needs to solve the problem (e.g., progressive MCM that could redefine modern preparedness). Our leaders must give priority to innovative approaches to engaging industry and others toward needed solutions in areas like diagnostics, detection, biosurveillance informatics, personal and collective protection, remediation, and attribution. Recent guidance from OMB on FY 2017 science and technology priorities emphasizes that agency budget requests should include funding for innovative programs in biosurveillance and in countering WMD.¹⁰⁶ This guidance must be taken seriously by every agency with a role to play in these areas; and henceforth, funding for innovation in science and technology should be the norm. Innovation in technological solutions, regulatory approaches, and even operations is fundamental to solving the biothreats problem. Creative thinking must permeate the strategic visions of all agencies that fund biodefense, not only those with specific charges to be innovative. The United States should be the first to innovate in biodefense, as we have in so many other areas. The alternative is that we fall behind and become beholden to other nations, or that we are simply unprepared for the next attack, outbreak, or pandemic. Our leaders must internalize that forward and creative thinking and ensure its pervasiveness.

This chapter addresses innovation in the following areas:

- I. Incentivizing Civilian Medical Countermeasure Development
- II. Leaping Ahead to a Modern State of Biodetection
- III. Removing Select Agent Program Impediments to Innovation
- IV. Implementing New Approaches to Global Health Response

I. INCENTIVIZING CIVILIAN MEDICAL COUNTERMEASURE DEVELOPMENT

The WMD Commission argued that a nation prepared with MCM is one that can take threat agents off the table.¹⁰⁷ MCM development stands out as an area in which innovation can move biodefense along by leaps and bounds. But these advancements will not occur without bold leadership, strategic initiatives, creative thinking, and more disruptive advancements. While we must not ignore long-standing, successful technologies that have yielded useful tools (e.g., traditional vaccines) to address specific biological threats, we still must push the envelope on next-generation technologies, innovations to address genetically engineered pathogens, and tools that allow for rapid assessment of immune triggers and for extremely rapid vaccine and therapy development and production. All of these, furthermore, can be linked to innovative acquisition strategies.

A systemic risk-averse culture has emerged that is stifling MCM innovation. If this continues to evolve, progress on biodefense objectives will be curtailed and the still nascent biodefense industry will have little incentive to participate. Innovation must become ingrained in current policies and practices to take advantage of the technologies available today and in the future.

Government and industry have successfully partnered to innovate before, and they can do so again. For example, during Operation Desert Storm and later deployments in the mid 1990s, DOD needed to deploy vaccines and therapeutics for operational use under clinical investigational protocols to protect soldiers from biological and chemical warfare threats and endemic infectious diseases. This required alternative thinking and risk tolerance on the part of policy makers, program leaders, and the FDA to use investigational new drug (IND) products in combat environments. This experience spurred further innovative thinking and legislative solutions that culminated in the emergency use authorities provided in the Project BioShield Act of 2004.

More recently, when Ebola emerged in 2014, the only MCM candidates available were in very early stages of development. The U.S. government and industry partners rose to this challenge and rapidly transitioned three experimental vaccines and one therapeutic into clinical development in fewer than three months. Although the rapid development and collapsed clinical trial design and implementation are not the optimal way of doing business, this was nevertheless a remarkable achievement requiring forward thinking and risk tolerance. Some lessons and disruptive ideas are emerging that build on the most positive and useful aspects of that experience.

NEW MODELS FOR MCM DEVELOPMENT

The Nation remains unprepared for known, unknown, and unexpected threats. The collective experiences described previously suggest that non-traditional development and surge models are not only a plausible way to deal with this challenge, but should become the planned strategy. The foundations that would allow this kind of progressive approach already exist: for example, BARDA has a statutory mission to promote "innovation to reduce the time and cost of countermeasure and product advanced R&D."¹⁰⁸ And Congress recently demonstrated interest in a substantial shift at NIH when it proposed an NIH Innovation Fund at \$2 billion annually.¹⁰⁹

The risks and the subsequent approach needed vary by pathogen, and this must be thought through strategically on a detailed, case-by-case basis. Non-traditional development and surge models should be considered – not just for humans, but also for animals. A formal strategy is needed to operationalize the capabilities and capacities needed to rapidly

identify immunogenic components, deliver antigen payloads in platform technologies, quickly manufacture MCM using flexible and adaptable technologies, and rapidly distribute MCM to affected populations in response to unanticipated and new threats, while decreasing the need for expensive and inefficient stockpiling. The federal government should work closely with industry to develop new strategies that strike the right balance between stockpiling MCM against known high consequence/low probability threats, and surge manufacturing for emerging and unknown threats.

The DOD had a transformational medical technologies initiative that was paving the way to develop capabilities that would enable rapid pathogen characterization, antigen identification, and platform technology approaches. Despite early success, the initiative was reduced in scope largely due to criticism that it was too risky and funding could be better used on traditional CBRN equipment and technologies. The DOD should consider initiating a similar medical technologies initiative today, challenging the risk-averse culture and leading the way for other agencies to follow.

Recommendation 27

Prioritize innovation over incrementalism in medical countermeasure development.
Leaders must not compromise funding for inherently innovative programs, but must also consider that innovation is a double-edged sword, as it may multiply the biological threat.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. **Prioritize innovation in medical countermeasures.** All agencies with biodefense responsibilities, Congress, the White House, and the Office of National Intelligence should establish a balanced approach of risk and innovation. A coordinated, risk-averse approach should be prioritized in innovation, prioritizing defense and mitigating inherent risks associated with the DOD's mission. The National Biodefense Strategy should include a balanced approach to innovation and leadership for advancing innovative technologies that can benefit both the defense and medical countermeasures of biological threats. Agency groups should be held accountable for all of these agencies to ensure clearly defined principles and leadership for this task.
2. **Expand existing legislation.** The National Defense Authorization Act and the Defense Science and Technology Directorate (DST) should expand their authority to develop and test medical countermeasures and medical technologies that are not currently covered by the FDAAA. The National Defense Authorization Act should also allow for the use of MCMs developed and tested under this authority. The National Defense Authorization Act should also include authority for medical countermeasures that include testing in an animal model, different from a human model. FDA should accelerate a pathway for medical countermeasures.

- c. **Revolutionize development of medical countermeasures for emerging infectious diseases with pandemic potential.** The Director of BARDA, in coordination with the Director of DASD for Chemical and Biological Defense, and in consultation with the Director of DASD for the protection of infectious diseases, will be the lead for establishing the mechanism to identify these threats, develop the scientific and technical plan for the program, and coordinate with the Director of DASD for Chemical and Biological Defense, and the Director of DASD for the protection of infectious diseases, and be as transparent as possible to government and industry partners during this process. The Administrator of APHIS will coordinate with the DASD Under Secretary for Science and the Director of APHIS to establish a mechanism to identify and prioritize infectious diseases with pandemic potential.
- d. **Establish an antigen bank.** The Director of DASD, the Director of BARDA, the Director for Chemical and Biological Defense, the Administrator of APHIS, and the DASD Under Secretary for Science and Technology should identify and establish a mechanism to store infectious materials and maintain a collection of materials considered to be of potential interest to the government and industry partners for use in the development of medical countermeasures.

FUNDING MCM INITIATIVES TO APPROPRIATE LEVELS

The development of any drug or vaccine candidate is a risky, lengthy, and expensive process. The challenges with MCM are even greater, because there is limited-to-no commercial market for these products and because the opportunity costs for doing this contract work for the government are too high for most experienced and innovative companies.

The federal government has, therefore, recognized that it alone can incentivize MCM development. It alone can account for intelligence, pathogen virulence, and the potential products already in development, and from there develop a plan for infectious disease threats that employs differing strategies and incentives. Given that some products may have viable commercial markets (e.g., antibiotics), limited commercial markets (e.g., acute radiation syndrome treatments), or no commercial market (e.g., pandemic influenza, tularemia, and Chikungunya MCM), a spectrum of strategies and incentives must be identified and leveraged to stimulate private sector development and manufacturing.

The legislative underpinnings for this are already present. Congress established Project BioShield and created BARDA to work with the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industry to plan and execute advanced development and procurement of MCM. The laws that established and funded Project BioShield and BARDA recognized that multi-year funding, transparent long-term strategies, and other incentives to include more flexible contracting mechanisms were required to garner industry's participation in solving biodefense problems. The Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act (P.L. 109-148) extensions to reduce tort liability are also very important statutory tools for incentivization, but the declarations under this Act for anthrax, smallpox, botulism, acute radiation syndrome, and pandemic influenza expire at the end of 2015 and must be reissued and extended by the Secretary of Health and Human Services before that time to ensure the continued participation of private sector partners.

BARDA was formed in 2006 and established a solid track record working with industry as a partner to develop and procure MCM for pathogens that DHS has determined pose material threats to the Nation.¹¹⁰ Approximately \$6 billion from FY 2004-2013 in advanced development and procurements allowed for the development and delivery of 12 MCM to the SNS. Another \$6 billion was provided in emergency supplement funding in FY 2006 to support pandemic influenza preparedness in accordance with the National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza. Given that the cost of bringing a single drug to the commercial market can be in excess of \$2 billion,¹¹¹ this investment is efficient and demonstrates the value of risk sharing through public-private partnerships (PPP). Twelve MCM, however, are not nearly enough considering the number and diversity of threats we face. This number could be doubled by 2018 if future congressional appropriations for the BioShield Special Reserve Fund (SRF) are adequate.

At the end of FY 2013, the original advanced appropriation for MCM procurements via the SRF¹¹² expired, and the supplemental pandemic influenza¹¹³ balances were exhausted shortly thereafter. The SRF and pandemic influenza programs became subject to annual appropriations in FY 2014 and have experienced dramatic decreases in funding. Viewed against authorized levels, the project BioShield funding shortfall alone could be as much as \$1.53 billion by 2018, eroding trust in the partnership model, resulting in fewer MCM, and leaving national security threats on the table. The shift from the advance-appropriated model to an annual appropriations process is highly questionable, given the relative success of the program, bipartisan support for it, and the lack of any decrease in the threat. It has even been questioned by the Director of BARDA.¹¹⁴ The expiration of the SRF eliminated the guaranteed market that allowed companies and venture capitalists to more easily make the case for investing their own capital in innovative MCM development. It also diminished the flexibility of the U.S. Government to use these no-year funds to respond to an unexpected threat without the need for a supplemental appropriation.

The best way to incentivize industry to a level that allows it to participate in biodefense programs and pursue truly innovative ideas is to: 1) fund MCM development to legislatively authorized levels; 2) re-establish multiyear advanced appropriations through the SRF; and 3) eliminate bureaucratic hurdles within the partnership. To further enhance the environment for innovation, especially as the partnership model between government and industry evolves, many have urged Congress and BARDA to adopt other incentives that would invigorate MCM developers. Government, policy thought leaders, and industry have proposed a variety of incentives including success-based milestone payments and monetary prizes; minimum procurements/advanced market commitments; guaranteed pricing; patent extensions; orphan drug status expansions; wild-card exclusivity; transferable data exclusivity extensions; and priority review vouchers for pathogens that DHS has determined to be material threats.

These proposals vary in their cost to government, their political feasibility to authorize, and, critically, in their palatability to the companies for which they are designed. BARDA and industry should convene to determine and recommend the most effective incentives beyond congressional appropriations. Recommendations for incentives should be designed for small biotechnology companies, large pharmaceutical companies, and those in between. The array of business models necessitates a variety of incentives.

Recommendation 28

Fully prioritize, fund, and incentivize the medical countermeasures enterprise to facilitate a national, multi-year commitment to MCM development and to immediately reduce the national gap in medical countermeasures.

ACTION ITEMS:

- a. Fund the medical countermeasure enterprise to no less than authorized levels. Continue to make available funds for MCM development through the BMR and the SBIR programs, and make funding available through existing programs. Longer-term funding must be reflective of the needs outlined in the National Strategy for Biochemical and Radiological Preparedness and emergency readiness outlined in this report.
- b. Re-establish multi-year biodefense funding for medical countermeasure development. The Department of Defense should consider establishing a dedicated program, similar to the National Nuclear Security Administration's weapons development program, to support the development of medical countermeasures for the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security, from the SBIR to industry to enterprise.
- c. Address prioritization and funding for influenza preparedness. At least every five years, the USAMRMC, in concert with all government and non-governmental stakeholders, should evaluate the current funding available for influenza preparedness and the gaps in funding. The USAMRMC should then propose a funding mechanism to address these gaps. The USAMRMC should also propose a funding mechanism to support the development of medical countermeasures for influenza preparedness. Congress should consider a separate supplementary designation for the medical countermeasures and public health influenza program.
- d. Improve the plan for incentivizing the private sector and academia. The DOD and DASD (R&D) Chemical and Biological Defense should advocate for government-wide classification of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons as congressional appropriations for MCM development and procurement. They should report findings and recommendations to Congress every six months, identifying fiscal incentives that reward industry, academic, and academic participation in MCM development, and requesting congressional authority for increased funding for MCM development.

REMOVING BUREAUCRATIC HURDLES TO MCM INNOVATION

Improving federal government contracting practices will enable the federal MCM enterprise to meet mission requirements. Legacy and current contracting practices are still not sufficiently transparent, uniformly implemented, predictable, or flexible enough to accommodate efficient MCM development, or to optimize industry participation to achieve U.S. government biodefense preparedness objectives. The evolving government-wide, risk-averse culture is a contributing factor and a growing disincentive for the very companies that the government needs to meet its requirements.

For example, the DOD MCM program utilizes an acquisition system that has evolved over the years for weapons systems. This acquisition model has been modified to some degree to accommodate life science applications and FDA regulatory requirements, but its use for vaccines has mixed to poor results with at least two vaccine candidates lingering in advanced development for almost 15 years.

DOD and Army acquisition leadership recently acknowledged that traditional and legacy acquisition strategies are hindering progress and industry participation for all biodefense technologies, including medical. The Army is now implementing new and innovative acquisition strategies including the use of other transaction authority (OTA) for MCM.¹¹⁸ Army leadership should be commended for implementing innovative acquisition and contracting strategies.

BARDA should similarly reduce unnecessary hurdles and implement innovative acquisition strategies, to include making greater use of OTA, as Congress originally intended when authorizing BARDA. The contracting authorities available to BARDA (like OTA) go beyond traditional Federal Acquisitions Regulation mechanisms, but these expanded authorities have only been used to establish one (non-Ebola) partnership to date. Additionally, BARDA should reestablish its own internal contracting authority, rather than rely on the separate ASPR Office of Acquisitions Management, Contracts and Grants. This would reduce unnecessary bureaucratic delays, improve efficiency and decision making, and enhance BARDA program effectiveness and accountability. Finally, when Project BioShield was created in 2004, its funding was derived from DHS while the program was administered by HHS, resulting in the need for OMB review. Now that all BioShield funds and procurement responsibilities are housed at HHS, an OMB review of contracts already approved and funded by HHS is unnecessary and slows MCM procurements.

Recommendation 29

Reform Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority contracting
 Recommendation 29 is intended to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the BARDA contracting process by returning authority to BARDA and leveraging existing authorities.

ACTION ITEMS:

- a. **Return contracting authority to the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority.** Congress should direct the Secretary of Defense to instruct the Secretary of State to return contracting authority to BARDA. This would allow BARDA to contract with industry using its own contracting mechanisms and reduce unnecessary bureaucratic delays. Congress should immediately pass legislation to implement this recommendation.
- b. **Leverage previously provided authorities.** BARDA should leverage the use of OTA and examine any other appropriate existing contracting authorities for BioShield and advancing medical countermeasures.
- c. **Eliminate Office of Management and Budget review of BioShield procurements.** Congress should direct the Office of Management and Budget to eliminate OMB review of BioShield procurements.

DEVELOPMENT OF RAPID POINT-OF-CARE DIAGNOSTICS LARGELY IGNORED

A rapid point-of-care diagnostic test would have significantly improved management of the Ebola outbreak abroad and in the United States – perhaps more than anything else. If it had been available, it would have significantly improved quarantine and isolation decisions at home and abroad, and saved countless lives. Ebola screenings of suspected patients were often based on little more than thermometer readings and a series of questions. While an assay was quickly fielded under an EUA, it was not a rapid and patient-side device of the kind that could exist by the hundreds or thousands in clinics and be used by anyone with limited training. The absence of such tests for many threats makes it difficult to ascertain the full scope of an incident, reliably distinguish infected from uninfected individuals, and determine appropriate intervention strategies.

Most physicians are not trained to recognize the early symptoms caused by emerging diseases or select agent pathogens. Initial symptoms (e.g., high fever, muscle aches, lethargy) that infected individuals exhibit for most biothreats are non-specific. Rapid recognition of illness caused by a novel biothreat against the background noise of more common and routine infections is, therefore, unlikely without access to definitive diagnostic tests for the new pathogen.

We must push hard to develop advanced molecular diagnostics in order to move beyond old technology and the incremental improvement of new technology. With the proper investment, we can get there. The technologies needed for the quick patient-side diagnostics of the kind used in doctors' offices to screen for influenza exist or are in development. However, their development has not been prioritized for Ebola and other threats on which the government and industry have spent billions on vaccines and therapeutics. From anthrax to influenza, the investment has been almost solely in drugs with a dearth of focus on diagnostics, and certainly not rapid point-of-care diagnostics.

This is extremely short sighted. These technological solutions require significant investment up front, but they can be highly leveraged when integrated into a biological response architecture. They spare vaccines, treatments, and the necessity for quarantine or isolation when they are not needed, saving valuable resources. Furthermore, increasingly sophisticated profiling of the molecular signatures of biothreat agents is also valuable in the event of a bioattack, potentially providing informative forensic clues for attribution and justification for actions based on this information.

Recommendation 30

Accelerate development of rapid point-of-care diagnostics. Point-of-care diagnostics can significantly reduce the time required to identify and respond to a bioattack, and thereby reduce the time available for an adversary to inflict damage.

ACTION ITEM:

Development requirements for rapid point-of-care diagnostics for all material biological threats and emerging infectious diseases. The Detection of DNA-based diagnostics for the range of material threats that are required for medical purposes, disease prevention, and rapid detection and characterization of emerging infectious diseases. DNA-based diagnostics have demonstrated the ability to perform rapid molecular analysis with high sensitivity and specificity across a wide range of agents. The NCMR is required to coordinate with industry, state laboratories, and other entities on capabilities to provide technologies with diagnostic performance.

II. LEAPING AHEAD TO A MODERN STATE OF BIODETECTION

Effective environmental surveillance improves pathogen identification and, most importantly, provides early warning. The federal government collects limited data on water and soil contamination, and lacks requirements that would incorporate any such data into a federal database. The biodetectors designed to inform biosurveillance of the air (commonly referred to as environmental detection) have not progressed significantly since their initial deployments.

The BioWatch program was launched in 2003 with great urgency, but its potential remains unrealized. As of 2015, BioWatch uses the same technology – manual filter collection and laboratory polymerase chain reaction testing – as it did twelve years ago. BioWatch is a DHS system of nationally distributed detectors that sample the air for a select number of bioterror pathogens in a few dozen cities. Non-federal public health laboratories then analyze the samples. The technological limitations of the system are many: 1) it relies on winds blowing in optimal directions; 2) it can take up to 36 hours to alert the possible presence of a pathogen; 3) specimens are inactivated, preventing determinations of whether live organisms were released; 4) it cannot differentiate between normal background bacteria and harmful pathogens; and 5) it cannot identify atypical threats. Beyond the scientific limitations are challenges in execution. For instance, federal agencies involved in determining what to do with test results often disagree as to what course of action should be taken and do not always consult non-federal public health and other leaders, even though many response decisions ultimately must fall to local leadership.

The entire BioWatch system is dying for lack of innovation. DHS attempted and failed to acquire next-generation BioWatch technology (Generation 3) that could have reduced time-to-detection to as few as six hours. Even if the acquisition had been successful, the system would still have been flawed: like the current system, it would have addressed only a small number of biological agents, inactivated them, and relied on non-random air currents. To date, no fully automated, tested, and evaluated autonomous detection system has been deployed that adequately addresses the airborne biological threat or sufficiently provides operational response information. Yet technological advances in sequencing and other relevant technology exist and could be fostered with clear requirements, meaningful PPP, and strongly focused innovation.

DHS R&D efforts are the responsibility of the S&T Directorate. OHA within DHS, however, pursued its own R&D activity in support of the Generation 3 effort, ultimately wasting time and funding. Congress should remind DHS leadership that DHS S&T and OHA have distinct – not overlapping – responsibilities. R&D efforts fall squarely and only in the purview of S&T per statute.¹¹⁸ Simultaneously, DOD engages in its own biodetection research and acquisition programs. While the needs of civilians and warfighters are generally distinct, the science behind environmental detection is not. DOD and DHS must better coordinate their environmental detection efforts and leverage each other's advances. Together (and with congressional oversight) these departments can develop a detection system capable of meeting today's threats with 21st century ingenuity and replace the ineffective civilian system currently in place.

<i>Recommendations</i>	
<p>Develop a 21st Century-ready environmental detection system. The Nation continues to lack a rapid and reliable environmental detection system for detecting and decontaminating biological warfare agents that must be reinforced.</p>	
<p>ACTION ITEMS:</p>	
<p>a. Fund the development of advanced environmental detection systems to replace BioWatch. Congress should be encouraged to direct the DHS and CDC to develop and implement an environmental detection system that is capable of detecting agents from biological warfare, decontaminating suspicious materials, detecting environmental pathogens, and providing information on the location of the contamination and its impact on operational readiness. The Vice President should lead a formal review between DHS, CDC, and other federal agencies, including the Department of Defense, to determine and propose a shared responsibility to develop and maintain a national environmental detection system that can be used in the event of a bio-response and other threats. This system should be able to detect a range of threats, including weapons, and inform other agencies of potential threats. This system should also develop an integrated strategic approach to decontamination based on the threat assessment.</p>	
<p>b. Propose the Next Generation 1 and 2 detectors. The scientific and congressional communities should be encouraged to propose a Next Generation 1 and 2 detector that can be developed within the framework of the National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Program and the National Defense Science and Engineering Graduate Program.</p>	

III. REMOVING SELECT AGENT PROGRAM IMPEDIMENTS TO INNOVATION

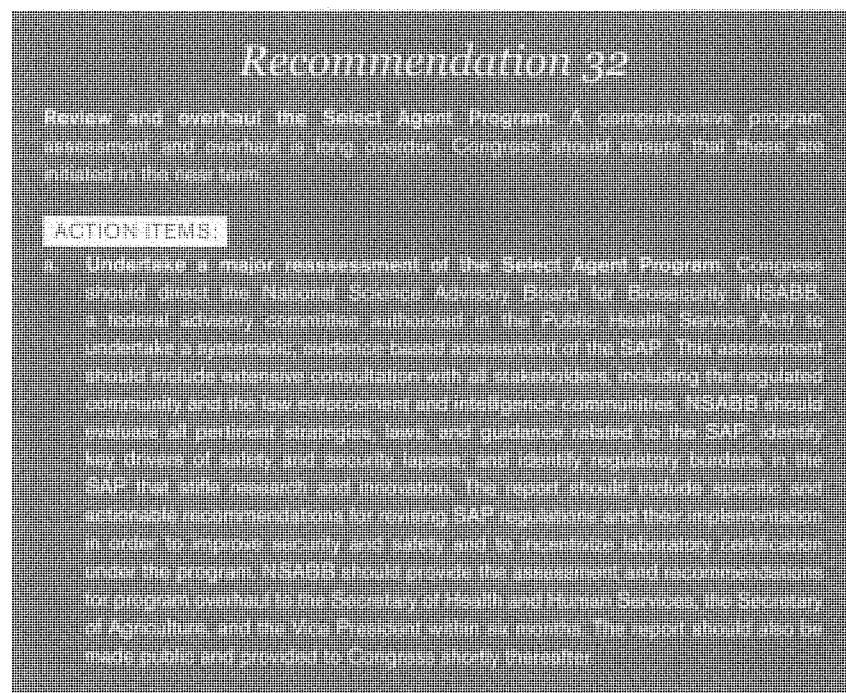
The primary federal program to prevent the misuse of pathogens and toxins is the SAP, administered jointly by the CDC and USDA.¹¹⁹ This program has functioned as an impediment to would-be attackers. Yet the regulatory regime of the SAP does not fully address underlying issues in pathogen safety and security, including how to prevent and deal with human error, how to ensure standards for safety and security awareness are met, and how to be more transparent within statutory confines about lapses and problems with the system. It is time for a complete review followed by a comprehensive overhaul.

Information, knowledge, and equipment to produce pathogens *de novo* (known as synthetic biology) have become increasingly available in the years since the SAP's establishment. Therefore, restriction of access to pathogens already secured in laboratories has decreased impact today. Furthermore, pathogens are not the only problem. Non-pathogens (e.g., bioregulators, small peptides) could also be used in biological weapons and yet fall outside of the current regulatory regime. SAP regulations can also reach burdensome levels that make the scientific workforce resistant to engaging in much needed biomedical research and provide minimal or no enhancement of biosafety or biosecurity.¹²⁰ SAP

regulations also fail to recognize the reality of select agents presenting in animal diagnostic samples, and the nature of the work that veterinary diagnostic laboratories must, therefore, do to keep the Nation and its animals safe and healthy.

Policymakers must address: discrepancies among the purpose of the SAP, rationale for its regulations, and criteria for determining which agents are added or removed from the list; barriers to full implementation of the SAP; the value of a dynamic characteristic-based approach for restricted agents and toxins versus the current, static list-based approach; challenges associated with inspections; whether federal and private investments in biodefense are maximized; and how to implement a restorative (rather than punitive) process for addressing problems.

The program has been reviewed, but the recommendations of the 2009 report of the Trans-federal Task Force on Optimizing Biosafety and Biocontainment Oversight were never fully implemented.¹²¹ An undeniable problem with this task force is that it was co-chaired by HHS and the USDA, the very agencies that administer the program. A different approach to identifying problems and ensuring that solutions are implemented is needed. Hopefully, the results of a Request for Public Comment by OSTP regarding the impact of SAP regulations¹²² will lead to a rigorous and comprehensive assessment of the program.¹²³ The focus of the overhaul should be less about whether we can secure stocks of pathogens and more about whether we can control the proliferation of information, predict the nature of the changing biological threat, and ingrain a culture of security awareness within the biomedical research community.



1. **Overhaul the Select Agent Program.** Based on the recommendations of the NSABB and input from other scientific organizations, the Secretary of Agriculture and Secretary of Health and Human Services should immediately implement a new oversight structure to manage the implementation of a revised Select Agent Program. The new structure should include a central coordinating office that oversees the Select Agent Program and its implementation, and include a dedicated office within the Department of Health and Human Services to facilitate communication with the scientific community. Oversight should span oversight over all aspects of the Select Agent Program.

IV. IMPLEMENTING NOVEL APPROACHES TO GLOBAL HEALTH RESPONSE

International cooperation is a key element in implementing global health strategies.¹²⁴ Through the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA), the United States and its international partners collaborate to prevent and mitigate the biological risk and to promote global health security as an international priority.¹²⁵ The GHSA was formally announced in 2014, setting a five-year agenda for prevention, detection, and response. It represents an ambitious plan to meet global gaps in surveillance, detection, and MCM availability. U.S. activities include establishing emergency operations centers, strengthening laboratory biosecurity in developing nations, partnering with international animal health authorities to rapidly detect and manage animal diseases, and implementing and strengthening the International Health Regulations and OIE reporting capacities.

Although the United States has helped build biosurveillance infrastructure in nations throughout the world where emerging diseases are likely to arise, Ebola proved that current efforts failed to achieve adequate surveillance capacity, and warning signs went unheeded. While there is disagreement over where exactly the failure occurred in terms of detecting Ebola and communicating that detection, health officials did seem to underestimate the timing and scope of the disease's transmission and were blinded by preconceptions that Ebola was a disease of the jungle and would not spread to cities.^{126,127} Senator Richard Burr characterized the Ebola outbreak as a "total breakdown of global detection."¹²⁸

Nowhere is the fragility of the human-animal disease boundary more pronounced than in developing nations, from where the majority of new infectious agents are emerging.¹²⁹ Urban areas are nucleation points for infectious disease risk and their populations are dramatically increasing in many of these countries. Because these nations often lack both public health and animal health infrastructures, their capacity for early and effective surveillance and mitigation efforts is challenged. Multilateral bodies like WHO and OIE must, therefore, support the development of in-country activities and capabilities to meet international standards, prevent cross-border spread of disease, and reduce the risk of accidentally or intentionally introduced biological threats. As a voting member of and major donor to both the WHO and OIE, and as a resource-rich nation with enormous public health expertise, the United States has an obvious role to play at the forefront of these efforts.

Investment in prevention would reduce the much higher cost of outbreak response and MCM. When prevention efforts fail, early detection and rapid response systems are needed to quickly resolve outbreaks before they spread. Global prevention and response capacity will not come from the WHO; it must come from nations who agree to make it a priority. The geographic hotspots at highest risk for these disease events have been identified¹³⁰ and further refined by recent analyses.¹³¹ What remains desperately needed is an off-the-shelf logistical enterprise at the ready to insert public health resources into areas where infectious diseases with pandemic potential are percolating after local resources have been overwhelmed.¹³² It was widely thought before the 2014 Ebola outbreak that the WHO was sufficiently equipped for this kind of rapid and large-scale response. It is not.

Logistical expertise and resources are critical enablers for quick and effective outbreak response. WHO does not possess sufficient logistical assets to fulfill this requirement. While other public sector (e.g., U.S. Transportation Command, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization) and private sector (e.g., Federal Express, DHL) organizations are proven logistical powerhouses, they are not regularly called upon to help. No individual organization or nation should take on this task alone. Rather, a PPP that incorporates a variety of logistical organizations, as well as others that would support such an effort (e.g., pharmaceutical companies) is clearly necessary.

The recent Ebola outbreak happened not because any single institution or nation failed, but because they failed collectively.¹³³ Together with their partners, the United States should leverage the GHSA to develop a global public health response capacity and build international threat awareness, reach consensus on priorities, improve regional and cross-border surveillance, and increase regional MCM stockpiling and distribution plans. The effectiveness of the effort will be only as good as the strategy by which it is implemented and the level of funding it receives. If we fail to aggressively fund and implement multilateral activities such as these, we risk something potentially much worse than Ebola.

Recommendation 33

Establish a global public health response capacity and build international threat awareness, reach consensus on priorities, improve regional and cross-border surveillance, and increase regional MCM stockpiling and distribution plans.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. **Coordinate international public health resources.** The Secretary of State should convene a meeting of national health leaders from throughout the world to evaluate current international and domestic threats and establish a plan for global public health responses. This organization should be multilateral and could be achieved through the GHSA and other international health organizations.
2. **Establish the response capacities.** Through the multilateral efforts described above, the United States must be prepared to respond effectively to the expected outcome of a functional public health response system. The United States must develop a national and international framework for responding to the United States and abroad.

APPENDIX A: PROPOSED CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT HEARINGS

The value of congressional oversight in ensuring that federal departments and agencies are meeting congressional and other mandates, and doing so in a coordinated fashion, cannot be overstated. These proposed hearing topics reflect major recommendations outlined in the report, as well as additional ideas for consideration.

ISSUE	STAKEHOLDER	HOUSE COMMITTEE	SENATE COMMITTEE
The Threat	Four commissions and the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense have expressed concern about the threat and the inability of the IC to modify or develop new methods to collect, analyze, and disseminate biological intelligence. What has changed since the release of the Robb-Silberman Commission report? Has the IC redirected resources to address this growing threat? If so, to what extent? What has the IC done to increase information sharing with state and local governments regarding the biological threat? (See Recommendation 16.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Judiciary Homeland Security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select Committee on Intelligence Judiciary Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Animal Disease Reporting	A nationally notifiable animal disease system akin to the existing system for human disease would enhance surveillance and detection of biological threats. A proposed National List of Reportable Animal Diseases has been offered by the USDA, but not yet implemented. What diseases should be on such a list? How could the list be part of a larger system by which states and other owners of disease information could willingly and comfortably report disease incidence? (See Recommendation 14.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture Homeland Security Natural Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Environment and Public Works Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
BARDA's Mission Space	BARDA's scope is being expanded to include development of MCM for antimicrobial resistant pathogens irrespective of ties to bioterrorism. How might this expansion require diversion of BARDA funding away from its original mission and force it to compete for additional funding? What level of funding is necessary to ensure that BARDA's statutory mission space in CBRN and emerging infectious disease is fully met?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriations Energy and Commerce Homeland Security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriations Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Biodefense Strategy	The United States lacks a unifying biodefense strategy. The unification of myriad federal biodefense mandates into a coherent strategy could serve as a backbone for progress and accountability. What should the elements of a unified national strategy for biodefense be? (See Recommendation 3.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture Armed Services Budget Energy and Commerce Homeland Security Oversight and Government Reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agriculture Armed Services Budget Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

ISSUE	SUMMARY	HOUSE COMMITTEE(S)	SENATE COMMITTEE(S)
Biosurveillance	The United States lacks a comprehensive biosurveillance and detection capability. An integrated biosurveillance function exists in statute, but has been difficult to realize. What would it take to bring the agencies with biosurveillance responsibilities together in a trusted, information-sharing environment? What is the needed end state for a continuous capability to detect, validate, and warn of any biological threat within U.S. borders? How would the participation of data owners be incentivized and ensured? (See Recommendations 11, 12, 13.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Energy and Commerce • Homeland Security • Natural Resources • Oversight and Government Reform • Veterans' Affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Environment and Public Works • Energy and Natural Resources • Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions • Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs • Veterans' Affairs
Budgeting	Lacking a unified approach to budgeting, biodefense budget requests are spread across a dozen departments and agencies. What is the best way to consolidate biodefense programs into a cross-cutting analysis? What would a unified biodefense budget look like and how could it best be utilized? (See Recommendation 4.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget
Cyber Vulnerabilities to the Life Sciences	Laboratory and research databases, as well as the expanding use of biotech information technology (e.g., monitors, sensors) within and outside of the government, contain information about pathogens that allows for great advances in biomedical science. It also creates a serious vulnerability. Where are the weak links in storage of life science information? What technologies exist or need to be developed to protect them? How can federal grant agreements and procurement contracts create a driving force for incentivizing protection of this information? (See Recommendation 24.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy and Commerce • Homeland Security • Oversight and Government Reform • Science, Space, and Technology • Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence • Transportation and Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health, Education, Labor and Pensions • Commerce, Science, and Transportation • Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs • Select Committee on Intelligence
Food Supply Protection and Response	The Food and Agriculture critical infrastructure sector is a distributed and highly complex system. Many efforts have been made to reduce the vulnerabilities of this system to terrorism and other insults. HSPD-9 (2004) and DHS's sector specific plan (2010) provide a foundation for the protection of this sector. Have the plans been updated, exercised, and sufficiently funded? Are they integrated with related efforts in biosurveillance, attribution, and decontamination standards? How will federal agencies (including the FDA and CDC) respond if there is a terrorist attack affecting the food supply? How can PPP in this area be improved? What efforts and funding are still required in biosurveillance and MCM to protect livestock? In decontamination and remediation to bring food processing plants back on line after an incident?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Energy and Commerce • Homeland Security • Natural Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry • Environment and Public Works • Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions • Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

ISSUE	SUMMARY	HOUSE COMMITTEE(S)	SENATE COMMITTEE(S)
Global Health Response	A global public health response apparatus that can react quickly and insert public health teams to respond to human and animal outbreaks is lacking. What is the current capacity and in what ways is it not meeting the need? How can international efforts be evaluated and better coordinated? What is the status of current global health reserve programs and how can they show more progress? What level of funding would be necessary? What lessons can be learned from the 2014 Ebola outbreak? (See Recommendation 33.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Armed Services • Foreign Affairs • Energy and Commerce • Natural Resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture • Armed Services • Foreign Relations • Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
MCM Innovation	The Ebola outbreak demonstrated that being caught in an outbreak situation without MCM puts us at serious risk. And yet, there were some signs that our MCM apparatus could at least partially rise to the occasion with alacrity. What is a good strategy for mustering needed resources rapidly enough to get some candidates off the shelf and into clinical trials? How can the U.S. government catalyze development of MCM for naturally emerging infectious diseases with pandemic potential? (See Recommendations 27, 28.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armed Services • Energy and Commerce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armed Services • Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Military-Civilian Biodefense Collaboration	The military provides support to civil authorities in accordance with established doctrine. However, it is unclear how much of this occurs in regard to biodefense. Military-civilian collaboration on biodefense would be beneficial to both sectors, especially as regards force protection (for the military sector) and responder protection (for the civilian sector). To what extent is collaboration between these sectors occurring now? What barriers and opportunities exist for collaborating on biodefense? What is needed to make this collaboration happen? (See Recommendation 26.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armed Services • Agriculture • Energy and Commerce • Homeland Security • Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence • Science, Space and Technology • Transportation and Infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armed Services • Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry • Commerce, Science, and Transportation • Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions • Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs • Select Committee on Intelligence
Origin of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API)	By some reports, 80% of API is manufactured outside of the United States, with the majority of these coming from India and China. Increasingly, critical products are made with API sourced outside of the United States. Does foreign sourcing of such material from developing countries improve U.S. ability to stockpile, or does it create vulnerability? What lessons can be learned from the current oncology drug shortage? Are there ways to develop U.S. opportunities for manufacturing the kinds of materials these nations currently supply, while aligning with free trade agreements and fostering innovation? Are existing agreements like the Trade Agreements Act being fully enforced? Could U.S. companies be incentivized to innovate toward this end?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armed Services • Energy and Commerce • Foreign Affairs • Homeland Security • Judiciary • Veteran's Affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armed Services • Foreign Relations • Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions • Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs • Judiciary • Veteran's Affairs

ISSUE	SUMMARY	HOUSE COMMITTEE(S)	SENATE COMMITTEE(S)
PHEMCE Coordination of MCM Efforts	Investment strategies for MCM must match product development goals. In what ways are the members of the PHEMCE still uncoordinated, from budget submissions to priority setting to procurements? Are funding allocations for participants appropriate to meet the need? What should be included in a NIAID biodefense spend plan to ensure its utility? How can Congress ensure that PHEMCE priorities and agencies meet requirements to address biological agents that have received MTDs and emerging and reemerging infectious diseases that are on the proposed priority list per Recommendation 7? (See Recommendation 8.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriations Energy and Commerce Homeland Security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appropriations Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Select Agent Program (SAP)	The SAP was established by Congress to better secure pathogens that, if stolen, could enable enemies to more easily develop biological weapons. Since its inception, however, SAP requirements seem to have become increasingly burdensome. How difficult is it to obtain necessary permissions to conduct research with select agents? How long does it take on average to receive permission (how many months, years)? How effective have USDA and the CDC been in administering the program? What efforts have been made to harmonize these rules with those of foreign countries to account for select agent use outside of the United States? (See Recommendation 32.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Energy and Commerce Armed Services Judiciary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Armed Services Judiciary
Vulnerable Populations	The needs of vulnerable populations must be considered in all biodefense planning. Children, the elderly, the disabled, the immunocompromised, and other at-risk groups require unique planning and resources, in everything from risk communication to MCM development and dispensing. Has the vision of the PAHPA for leaders to recognize and address the health security needs of children and other vulnerable populations been met? Where are continued gaps in planning and implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeland Security Energy and Commerce Veterans' Affairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Veteran's Affairs

APPENDIX B: METHODOLOGY

The Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense was established in 2014 to inform U.S. biodefense and provide recommendations for change. The Panel – supported by a suite of ex officio members; institutional hosting through Hudson Institute and the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies at Potomac Institute for Policy Studies; and funds from academia, foundations, and industry – set out to determine where the United States has fallen short of addressing bioterrorism, biological warfare, and emerging and reemerging infectious diseases.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to address the gaps in the biodefense enterprise and the biodefense body of knowledge, the following research questions were developed:

- 1) Are our priorities correct?
- 2) Are our investments commensurate with the challenge?
- 3) Can we benefit by rebalancing investments or is new funding required?
- 4) What have we done that has brought a significant return on investment?
- 5) What else should we be doing that we are not?

PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

The Panel reviewed previous research efforts; scientific studies; reports by congressional and presidential commissions (including the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century, Commission on Terrorist Attacks on the United States, Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction, and Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism); presidential directives; statute and proposed legislation; GAO reports; and federal strategies, plans, budgets, organizational constructs, and programs related to defense against deliberately introduced and naturally occurring biological events with catastrophic potential. This review: 1) allowed for an assessment of the comprehensiveness of efforts to address the postulated and actual biodefense challenges they were intended to meet; and 2) determined how the understanding of the threat, the knowledge base, and elements of the biodefense enterprise should change in light of this assessment. This review also informed the structure and topics of the four formal meetings of the Panel.

FORMAL PANEL MEETINGS

The four formal meetings were organized around the pillars of U.S. national biodefense policy (as articulated in National Security Presidential Directive 33 and Homeland Security Presidential Directive 10) – threat awareness, prevention and protection, surveillance and detection, and response and recovery. During each of these day-long meetings, members of the Panel, ex officio members, and study staff received: 1) information regarding current relevant national policy, legislative issues, and departmental and agency programmatic activities; and 2) statements from current and former Members of Congress, current and former federal officials, state and local representatives, thought leaders, and subject matter experts. Panel staff summarized the major insights, areas for improvement, and recommendations articulated by meeting speakers, and conducted preliminary high-level analysis of each day-long meeting for Panel and ex officio review.

SATELLITE WORKSHOPS

The activities of the Panel were enhanced by four meetings held by biodefense stakeholders. Four groups agreed to hold satellite workshops at which they convened experts and discussed key biodefense issues in-depth. They presented their findings at the third public meeting of the Panel. These meetings were hosted by the: MESH Coalition in Indianapolis, Indiana (on hospital preparedness); New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in New York, New York (on major urban area concerns, ranging from environmental detection to MCM dispensing); the Texas A&M University Health Sciences Center in College Station, Texas (on the human-animal interface in biodefense); and the Alliance for Biosecurity in Washington, DC (on MCM research, development, and procurement). These groups identified specific areas in need of policy, legislative, programmatic, and resource improvement for the Panel to consider.

ANALYSIS

Qualitative methods were used to analyze all of this information. The Panel examined the oral and written statements provided by meeting speakers and developed a table that mapped their findings and recommendations to the capabilities required in HSPD-10. Each finding and recommendation was then further evaluated by various means, including additional policy research and interviews with subject matter experts and former high level officials, as well as in light of the Panel's own experience. Throughout the process, the five questions defined previously provided the basis for assessment. This approach allowed the Panel, ex officio members, and staff to identify continuing organizational, legal, policy, and programmatic issues and recommend specific near-, medium-, and long-term solutions. Statistical and other quantitative methods were not used for this study. The study is not considered pseudo-qualitative/quasi-quantitative.

STUDY LIMITATIONS

Funding and other resource constraints prevented the Panel from performing site visits. In addition, a number of biodefense programs and policies; intelligence, raw data, and documents; appropriations and budget documents; and other sensitive pieces of information are classified or otherwise unavailable, and were not reviewed by the Panel as this was a wholly unclassified endeavor.

APPENDIX C: MEETING AGENDAS AND SPEAKERS

All meetings were held at Hudson Institute, Washington, D.C.

MEETING 1: THREAT AWARENESS DECEMBER 4, 2014

Congressional Perspective

- ▶ The Honorable Richard Burr – United States Senator, North Carolina and Chairman, Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

Panel One: WMD Commission Perspectives

The relevance of the WMD Commission's past work, its assessment of the potential threat, and its evaluation of U.S. preparedness efforts

- ▶ Senator James M. Talent, J.D. – Senior Fellow, American Enterprise Institute
- ▶ Colonel Randall Larsen, USAF (ret.) – Former Executive Director, Congressional Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation and Terrorism

Lunch Keynote

The threat

- ▶ The Honorable Richard J. Danzig, J.D. – Director, Center for a New American Security

Panel Two: Executive Branch Perspectives

Contemporary insights on the nature of the chemical and biological threats, and the ability of the Department of Homeland Security, Intelligence Community, and Congress to define the risks

- ▶ The Honorable Tara O'Toole, M.D., M.P.H. – Executive Vice President, In-Q-Tel
- ▶ The Honorable Michael Moodie, M.A. – Former Assistant Director for Multilateral Affairs, U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency
- ▶ George Poste, D.V.M., Ph.D. – Director, Complex Adaptive Systems Institute, Arizona State University

Panel Three: Non-Governmental Perspectives

The potential enabling role that modern technology affords states, non-states, and individuals to conduct biological and chemical terrorism

- ▶ Peter J. Roman, Ph.D. – President, WIT Consulting LLC
- ▶ W. Seth Carus, Ph.D. – Distinguished Research Fellow, National Defense University
- ▶ Keith H. Wells, Ph.D. – Senior Consultant, BioProcess Technology Consultants

MEETING 2: PREVENTION AND PROTECTION

JANUARY 14, 2015

Panel One: Biological Arms Control, Cooperative Threat Reduction, the Global Health Security Agenda, and Quarantine

International challenges and opportunities in reducing the risk from biological threats

- ▶ Daniel M. Gerstein, Ph.D., M.S.N.S.S., M.M.A.S., M.S.O.R. – RAND Corporation
- ▶ David R. Franz D.V.M., Ph.D. – Former Commander, United States Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Disease
- ▶ Elizabeth E. Cameron, Ph.D. – Director, Countering Biological Threats, National Security Council staff
- ▶ Michael A. Stoto, Ph.D. – Professor of Health Systems Administration and Population Health, Georgetown University

Lunch Keynote

First responder protection

- ▶ William F. Raub, Ph.D. – Public Health Consultant

Panel Two: Biosecurity, the Select Agent Program, and Synthetic Biology

Understanding the challenges of laboratory research in the context of modern threats, regulatory regimes, and new technologies

- ▶ Timothy Lu, M.D. Ph.D. – Associate Professor, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- ▶ Thomas G. Ksiazek, D.V.M., Ph.D. – Professor, Department of Pathology, University of Texas Medical Branch

Panel Three: Resilience, Biodeterrence, First Responder Vaccination, and Agricultural Defense

Means of creating a society resilient to biological threats through deterrence, public health and animal health measures, and protections for first responders

- ▶ Jeffrey Levi, Ph.D. – Executive Director, Trust for America's Health
- ▶ Bruce E. Miller, O.E., M.S. – Assistant to the Vice President for Homeland Security, Office of the Vice President (2001-2009)
- ▶ Sgt. Mark R. Landahl, Ph.D. – Supervisor, Frederick County (MD) Sheriff's Office
- ▶ Curt J. Mann, D.V.M. – Principal, Empryse Group

Panel Four: Insights on Ebola and Pandemic Influenza Response

Real-world outbreaks and the ways in which they have demonstrated U.S. strengths and weaknesses, particularly with respect to medical countermeasures

- ▶ Robin Robinson, Ph.D. – Director, HHS/Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA)
- ▶ Monique K. Mansoura, Ph.D., M.B.A. – Head, Medical Countermeasures & Government Affairs, Americas, Novartis Influenza Vaccines
- ▶ Daniel Lucey, M.D., M.P.H. – Adjunct Professor Georgetown University Medical and Law Centers, & School of Foreign Service

MEETING 3: SURVEILLANCE AND DETECTION

MARCH 12, 2015

Congressional Perspective

- ▶ The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse – United States Senator, Rhode Island

Panel One: The Biosurveillance and Detection Landscape

Key elements of effective biosurveillance and detection, and continued challenges in the effectiveness of ongoing efforts

- ▶ Julie Louise Gerberding, M.D., M.P.H. – Executive Vice President, Strategic Communications, Global Public Policy, & Population Health, Merck & Co., Inc.
- ▶ Julie E. Fischer, Ph.D. – Associate Research Professor of Health Management and Policy, The Milken Institute School of Public Health, The George Washington University
- ▶ Norman M. Kahn – Former Director, Intelligence Community Counter-Biological Weapons Program

Panel Two: Environmental Surveillance and Detection

Technological and policy challenges to early and reliable detection of environmentally dispersed biological and chemical agents

- ▶ The Honorable Jeffrey Runge, M.D. – Former Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs and Chief Medical Officer, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- ▶ Denise Pettit, Ph.D. – Assistant Director, North Carolina State Laboratory of Public Health
- ▶ Eric Joseph Van Gieson, Ph.D. – Senior Director, Diagnostics and Biosurveillance Innovation, MRIGlobal

Lunch Keynote

The human-animal interface

- ▶ William B. Karesh, D.V.M. – Executive Vice President for Health and Policy, EcoHealth Alliance

Panel Three: Clinical Surveillance and Detection

Key elements of an effective clinical surveillance and detection architecture, and impediments and opportunities to increase situational awareness for early and accurate disease detection and clinical diagnosis

- ▶ Dan Didier, M.D., Ph.D. – Head of Public Health, Thermo Fisher Scientific
- ▶ Daniel P. Desmond – Founder, The SIMI Group, Inc.
- ▶ Deborah G. Rosenblum, M.A. – Executive Vice President, The Nuclear Threat Initiative
- ▶ Robert W. VanDine – Chief Government Affairs, RPS Diagnostics, Inc.

Panel Four: Law Enforcement, Attribution, and the Lone Wolf

Law enforcement activities, attribution of deliberate acts, and the problem of the lone wolf

- ▶ Randall S. Murch, Ph.D., M.S. – Professor in Practice, School of Public and International Affairs, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech)
- ▶ Yonah Alexander, Ph.D. M.A. – Professor and Director, Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies
- ▶ Edward H. You, M.S. – Supervisory Special Agent, Biological Countermeasures Unit, Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Panel Five: Read-outs from Study Panel Satellite Meetings

Presentation of findings and recommendations from satellite meetings held in support of the Study Panel

- ▶ Elizabeth G. Posillico, Ph.D. – President & CEO, Elusys Therapeutics, Inc.
- ▶ Gerald W. Parker, D.V.M., Ph.D., M.S. – Vice President for Public Health Preparedness and Response, Texas A&M University Health Science Center
- ▶ Beth Maldin Morgenthau, M.P.H. – Assistant Commissioner, Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- ▶ Timothy Stephens, M.A. – CEO, MESH Coalition

MEETING 4: RESPONSE AND RECOVERY
APRIL 1, 2015

Congressional Perspective

- ▶ The Honorable Mike Rogers – Former Chairman, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (2011-2015), and Distinguished Fellow, Hudson Institute

Panel One: Pre-event Activities and Emergency Response

Pre-event and post-event planning, including the challenges faced by first responders and hospitals, and the role of DOD and other federal agencies

- ▶ Chief G. Keith Bryant – President and Chairman of the Board, International Association of Fire Chiefs
- ▶ Matthew Minson, M.D. – Senior Advisor for Health Affairs, Texas Engineering Extension Service, Texas A&M University
- ▶ Carter Mecher, M.D. – Senior Medical Advisor, Office of Public Health, Department of Veterans Affairs

Panel Two: Public Health Response

Challenges of real-time epidemiology and other tools for characterizing the spread of disease or a large-scale chemical event throughout United States and elsewhere

- ▶ James Terbush, M.D., M.P.H. – Senior Partner, Martin, Blanck and Associates
- ▶ Suzet M. McKinney, Dr.P.H., M.P.H. – Deputy Commissioner, Bureau of Public Health Preparedness and Emergency Response, Chicago Department of Public Health
- ▶ Melissa S. Hersh, M.A. – Principal, Hersh Consulting, LLC

Lunch Keynote

Thinking about readiness at scale, and with imagination

- ▶ Irwin Redlener, M.D. – Director, National Center for Disaster Preparedness, Columbia University

Panel Three: Pharmaceutical Response

Response requirements for medical countermeasures, including the need for extremely rapid development, distribution, and dispensing

- ▶ Anne S. De Groot, M.D. – EpiVax, Inc. CEO/CSO
- ▶ Daniel J. Abdun-Nabi, J.D. – President & Chief Executive Officer, Emergent BioSolutions Inc.
- ▶ Michael W. Chervenick, M.B.A. – Managing Director, Stokes Evans
- ▶ Jude M. Plessas – Executive Manager, Countermeasures Delivery and Distribution, United States Postal Service

Panel Four: Recovery and Mitigation

Recovery and mitigation, including the challenges posed by cutting edge technology, lack of agreement regarding agency responsibilities, resilience, and implications for future preparedness

- ▶ Kavita M. Berger, Ph.D. – Scientist, Gryphon Scientific
- ▶ Michael J. Hopmeier, M.S.M.E. – President, Unconventional Concepts, Inc.
- ▶ Kenneth W. Staley, M.D., M.P.A. – Former Director for Biodefense Policy, Homeland Security Council

Panel Five: Leadership

The unique challenges and opportunities for leaders in biodefense, and the need to expand the ranks

- ▶ RADM Kenneth Bernard, M.D., D.T.M&H, USPHS (Ret.) – Adviser on Security and Health, Former Special Assistant to the President for Biodefense
- ▶ Lisa E. Gordon-Hagerty, M.P.H. – President, Tier Tech International, Inc.
- ▶ Colonel Robert Kadlec, M.D., USAF (Ret.) – Former Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Biodefense Policy, Homeland Security Council

APPENDIX D: ACRONYMS

API	active pharmaceutical ingredients	MTD	Material Threat Determination
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service	NAHLN	National Animal Health Laboratory Network
ASPR	Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response	NBIS	National Biosurveillance Integration System
BARD	Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority	NBFAC	National Bioforensics Analysis Center
BWC	Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention	NCA	National Command Authority
CBRN	chemical, biological, radiological, and/or nuclear	NIAID	National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	NIH	National Institutes of Health
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services	NIM	National Intelligence Manager
DASD	Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense	NSABB	National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security	NSC	National Security Council
DNI	Director of National Intelligence	NSDM	National Security Decision Memorandum
DOD	U.S. Department of Defense	OHA	Office of Health Affairs
DOI	U.S. Department of the Interior	OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
DOL	U.S. Department of Labor	OMB	Office of Management and Budget
DOS	U.S. Department of State	OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	OSTP	Office of Science and Technology Policy
EUA	Emergency Use Authorization	OTA	other transaction authority
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation	PAHPA	Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act
FDA	U.S. Food and Drug Administration	PHEMCE	Public Health Emergency Medical Countermeasures Enterprise
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency	PHEP	Public Health Emergency Preparedness program
GAO	Government Accountability Office	POD	point of dispensing
GHSA	Global Health Security Agenda	PREP	Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act	PPE	personal protective equipment
HSPD	Homeland Security Presidential Directive	PPP	public-private partnership(s)
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	R&D	research and development
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus	S&T	Science and Technology
HPP	Hospital Preparedness Program	SAP	Select Agent Program
HSC	Homeland Security Council	SNS	Strategic National Stockpile
IC	Intelligence Community	SRF	Special Reserve Fund
ICE	Immigration and Customs Enforcement	WHO	World Health Organization
IND	investigational new drug	WMD	weapon(s) of mass destruction
IDM	Institute of Medicine	USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
ISAC	Information Sharing and Analysis Center	USPS	U.S. Postal Service
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (also known as Da'esh)	VA	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
JCAT	Joint Counterterrorism Assessment Team		
MCM	medical countermeasure(s)		

APPENDIX E: FINANCIAL SPONSORS

The Panel received financial support from many organizations. Each of these contributors enthusiastically provided the funding needed to promote the efforts of the Panel. Without their substantial support, the Panel and its report would not have been possible. For this and for their commitment to biodefense, we thank them.

- ▶ Bavarian Nordic
- ▶ Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO)
- ▶ Dalrymple & Associates, LLC
- ▶ Elusys Therapeutics, Inc.
- ▶ Emergency Services Coalition for Medical Preparedness
- ▶ Emergent BioSolutions Inc.
- ▶ HWC (formerly Hassett Willis and Company)
- ▶ Luminex Corporation
- ▶ MESH Coalition
- ▶ The Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI)
- ▶ Open Philanthropy Project
- ▶ PharmAthene, Inc.
- ▶ REGENXBIO Inc.
- ▶ SIGA Technologies, Inc.
- ▶ Smith Richardson Foundation, Inc.
- ▶ Texas A&M University

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense exists because of the foresight, forbearance, and perpetual optimism of Dr. Robert Kadlec. Bob understood that as much progress as had been made in the national effort to prevent and prepare for biological threats, it is not yet enough. He knew that with the right impetus, we could do much more, and he envisioned this Panel as a means to that end. We are glad he did.

Two institutions quickly stepped up to host the initiative: Hudson Institute provided an excellent venue for the Panel's public meetings, deep subject matter expertise, and an administrative home base that allowed the day-to-day activities of the Panel to proceed efficiently; and the Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies at the Potomac Institute for Policy Studies offered their space, financial resources, and profound expertise in the roots of terrorism to lend further credential to the initiative. The Panel and its report came to fruition because of the willingness of these organizations to support this endeavor.

We thank our financial sponsors for the outstanding support they provided to make this initiative a reality. They are listed in Appendix E.

The many speakers who graciously and enthusiastically accepted invitations to address the Panel are listed in Appendix C. Their contributions were invaluable. Their perspectives (based on years in public service, the field, and elsewhere) helped the Panel identify areas in which efforts were lagging and informed the Panel's recommendations for action. Enthusiastic Capitol Hill staff juggled their Members' schedules to ensure that congressional input was received. Many Hill staff also encouraged us to establish the Panel from the very beginning, came to its public sessions, facilitated informal meetings with their bosses, and worked with the Panel in hopes that its final product would be received by a Congress willing to act upon it. Similarly, many individuals in the Executive Branch were supportive of the Panel's activities and helped inform our findings and recommendations. We thank them for their dedication to this cause.

Several organizations hosted workshops to delve deeply into specific issue areas. Representatives presented their findings to the Panel and contributed substantially to the report. These organizations were the Alliance for Biosecurity, MESH Coalition, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Texas A&M University Health Science Center.

Many other individuals and organizations unable to participate in the public meetings also provided information to the Panel for consideration. Ms. Megan Reeve Snair and many others reviewed and provided feedback on the draft report. Input from subject matter experts and stakeholders helped shape the report in many ways. There are far too many contributors to name, but we thank them all for their exceptional commitment to biodefense.

ENDNOTES

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- 2 From 1943 to 1969, the United States learned how to weaponize, distribute, combine, manipulate, and counteract many biological agents (e.g., *Bacillus anthracis*, *Clostridium botulinum*, *Coxiella burnetii*, *Francisella tularensis*, *Geminston virus*, *Puccinia graminis*, *Sendai virus*, *Staphylococcal Enterotoxin B*, Venezuelan equine encephalitis virus, and *Yersinia pestis*), as well as anti-materiel organisms.
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- 4 Miller, J., Engelberg, S., & Broad, W. (2001). *Germs: Biological Weapons and America's Secret Wars* (p. 150). New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- 5 Inter-University Center for Terrorism Studies. (2014). *Reassessing the WMD Challenges: The Next Phase*. Washington, DC: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies.
- 6 Discussions of the threat in this report have been informed not only by experts who presented to the Study Panel, but also by classified and unclassified intelligence information. No classified information is discussed. Unclassified information that may have otherwise been useful to the discussion was not actually included if doing so would result in classified statements, particularly regarding the activities of the Intelligence Community. Discussions of the threat and of intelligence actions related to it are, therefore, necessarily high level and not highly specific.
- 7 U.S. Department of State. (2015). *Adherence to and Compliance with Arms Control, Nonproliferation, Disarmament Agreements and Commitments*. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/t/acrls/rpt/2015/243224.htm>
- 8 For example, an estimated 100-200 tons of weaponized anthrax were buried by Russia on Vozrozhdeniye Island in the Aral Sea in 1988, incompletely destroyed, and never properly secured after the island came under the control of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Even if only 50 tons of the weaponized anthrax on Vozrozhdeniye Island remains, this one source of anthrax unaccounted for is 45 million times larger than the 5 grams used in the U.S. anthrax attacks of 2001. Pala, C. (2003, March 22). *Anthrax Buried for Good*. The Washington Times.
- 9 The smuggling of biological agents and weapons from poorly secured, previously established stockpiles – such as areas where the Soviets buried anthrax – is of concern, particularly through those countries surrounding the Middle East. Nations containing smuggling routes; inadequate border control systems, export laws, and export controls; and groups or individuals that could help to smuggle biological agents and weapons are all at risk, including the United States.
- 10 Advances in and diffusion of biological expertise, technology, and information have accelerated and led to the democratization of the capabilities and capacity necessary to produce biological agents and weapons throughout the world.
- 11 Advanced science and technology are necessary for the production of biological weapons, as are laboratories, physical space in which to conduct necessary experimentation and production, personnel trained in laboratory science, and military and other planners who know how best to utilize such weapons.
- 12 Resources and intent alone do not result in the immediate capability to produce biological agents or weapons. See Vogel, K.M. (2008). *Framing Biosecurity: An Alternative to the Biotech Revolution Model?* *Sci Pub Pol*, 35(1):45-54.
- 13 Rogers, M. (Speaker). (2015, April 1). Meeting 4 of the Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense: Response and Recovery.
- 14 Alexander, Y., & Svetnam, M. (2012). *Al-Qaida: Ten Years After 9/11 and Beyond*. Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies.
- 15 Nothing prevents U.S. citizens who are bioscience professionals from joining domestic militia groups, although U.S. laws do prohibit these professionals from removing biological agents from laboratories and developing biological weapons in the United States. U.S. domestic militia members have produced ricin and sarin on a larger scale than they had previously, demonstrating increasing capabilities. Valla, E.J. & Comcowich, G. (2008). *Domestic Terrorism: Forgotten but Not Gone*. In J.H. Norwitz (Ed.), *Armed Groups: Studies in National Security, Counterterrorism, and Counterinsurgency* (p. 176). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- 16 Lone wolves are individuals who do not operate within the organizational constructs offered by militias, domestic violent extremist groups, or terrorist groups. Lone wolves are more difficult to track than domestic militia groups. As with members of ISIL, lone wolves have left social mores behind. A lone wolf who obtains biological agents or weapons should be expected to use them with little hesitation. Additionally, U.S. citizens who sympathize with ISIL and likeminded groups may present an equal or even greater danger than terrorist groups.
- 17 Kuntz, C. (2012). *Biodefense: When Technology Goes Global*. Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies.
- 18 Potomac Institute for Policy Studies. (1991). *Conference on Countering Biological Terrorism: Strategic Firepower in the Hands of Many?* Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies.
- 19 For example, the influenza season takes an estimated 3,000-49,000 U.S. lives annually. Thompson, M.G., Shay D.K., Zhou, H., Bridges, C.B., Cheng, P.Y., et al. (2010). *Updated Estimates of Mortality Associated with Seasonal Influenza through the 2006-2007 Influenza Season*. *MMWR*, 59(33), 1057-1062.
- 20 Extremely drug resistant tuberculosis is just one example of a reemerging disease that we had hoped to eradicate, but which is evading the medicines currently at our disposal. Our inability to prevent the misuse of antimicrobials, combined with the ability of organisms to mutate and outpace development of new countermeasures, means that diseases we thought we had conquered remain with us. Organisms can also be intentionally manipulated to worsen their effects. Intentionally over-using antimicrobials to produce drug-resistant diseases, purposely convincing people to avoid vaccination, and deliberately spreading infectious diseases will weaken any population, making them easier to control and defeat.
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25 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014, July 8). CDC Media Statement on Newly Discovered Smallpox Specimens [Press release]. Retrieved from: <http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2014/s0708-NIH.html>

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32 Examples include Stewart Simonson (Bird Flu Czar), Ron Klain (Ebola Czar), and Richard Clarke (Terrorism and Counter-terrorism Czar).

33 The National Performance Review was a task force on government performance.

34 The National Strategy for Biosurveillance is an example.

35 Determinations of the number of departments and agencies that contribute to biodefense depend on how biodefense is defined. See: Sell, T. K., & Watson, M. (2013). *Federal Agency Biodefense Funding, FY2013-FY2014*. *Biosecur Bioterror*, 11(3), 196-216, which describes nine departments and agencies based on an analysis of budget documents. See also H.R. 2356, Sec. 104, 112th Congress, which called for the inclusion of 12 departments and agencies in a biodefense budget analysis.

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37 The World War II War Production Board provides an example of this kind of council.

38 In addition to the Biological Incident Annex of the National Response Plan, other annexes related to the response to biological incidents are the Public Health and Medical Services Annex, Oil and Hazardous Materials Response Annex, and Agriculture and Natural Resources Annex.

39 The behavior of weaponized pathogens differs from naturally occurring biological agents in terms of incubation rates, disease severity, and other characteristics.

40 Many of these are discussed in: Polin, D. (2009, May 15). *A U.S. Biodefense Strategy Primer*. LLNL-TR-413042. Livermore, CA: Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

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55 For example, after a biological release at Tulane University, Tulane's primate center staff collected the environmental samples while EPA team members directed where and how many samples were collected. Young, A. (2015, March 5). *Deadly Bacteria Release Sparks Concern at Louisiana Lab*. *USA TODAY*. Retrieved from <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2015/03/01/tulane-primate-bio-lab-bacteria-release/24137053/>

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81 For proposed language, see H.R. 3299, Sec. 2, 114th Congress.

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111 Tufts Center for the Study of Drug Development. (2014, November 18). Cost to Develop and Win Marketing Approval for a New Drug Is \$2.6 Billion. Retrieved from: http://csdd.tufts.edu/news/complete_story/pr_tufts_csd_2014_cost_study

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115 The Other Transactional Authority (OTA) can offer increased flexibility and be less onerous than traditional Federal Acquisitions Regulations contracting, making it particularly appealing to companies that do not have experience with more typical government contracting requirements.

116 For proposed language, see H.R. 3299, Sec. 6, 114th Congress.

117 For proposed language, see H.R. 3299, Sec. 5, 114th Congress.

118 Title III of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, P.L. 107-296, 6 U.S.C. §195b (2005).

119 The Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness Act of 2002, P.L. 107-188, 42 U.S.C., defined and authorized the regulation of select agents and toxins.

120 For example, laboratory personnel currently spend many hours engaged in the bureaucratically tedious process of inventory control of select agent pathogens, but this has little security meaning when applied to biological organisms. While it is important to know that a laboratory stores a particular pathogen, it is of little meaning to know that the laboratory stores either two tubes or three of a replicating biological organism.

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123 This assessment should address research investment, governance policies, and the challenge of conducting biodefense research in a continuously changing regulatory environment. It should also assess other problematic areas, including the process for adding and removing pathogens from the list, lack of pathways for appeal of SAP decisions, and the destruction of samples for security reasons.

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Post-Hearing Questions for the Record
Submitted to Sen. Joseph Lieberman and Gov. Thomas Ridge
From Senator Ron Johnson

“Assessing the State of Our Nation’s Biodefense”

October 28, 2015

1. Please provide a prioritized list of the recommendations identified in the biodefense report, and specifically indicate recommendations that require Congressional action.

The Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense (the Panel) believes that the 33 recommendations it provided in its bipartisan report, *A National Blueprint for Biodefense: Leadership and Major Reform Needed to Optimize Efforts*, are the most important recommendations for the Nation. Of these, the Panel believes that the highest priority recommendations are those that the Executive Branch or Legislative Branch (1) must accomplish in order to effectively allow for the execution of other recommendations; (2) can address quickly with the least expenditure in resources; or (3) must implement immediately to protect the Nation against clear and present biological threats. In order, these recommendations are:

Priority	Recommendation	Requires or Could Require Congressional Action
1	<i>Recommendation 1: Institutionalize biodefense in the Office of the Vice President of the United States</i>	No
2	<i>Recommendation 3: Develop, implement, and update a comprehensive national biodefense strategy</i>	Yes
3	<i>Recommendation 4: Unify biodefense budgeting</i>	Yes
4	<i>Recommendation 5: Determine and establish a clear congressional agenda to ensure national biodefense</i>	Yes
5	<i>Recommendation 14: Improve surveillance of and planning for animal and zoonotic outbreaks</i>	Yes
6	<i>Recommendation 6: Improve management of the biological intelligence enterprise</i>	Yes
7	<i>Recommendation 15: Provide emergency service providers with the resources they need to keep themselves and their families safe</i>	Yes
8	<i>Recommendation 21: Establish a biodefense hospital system</i>	Yes
9	<i>Recommendation 28: Fully prioritize, fund, and incentivize the medical countermeasure enterprise</i>	Yes
10	<i>Recommendation 31: Develop a 21st Century-worthy environmental detection system</i>	Yes

2. The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) currently holds \$6 billion in assets, according to HHS. Those assets are supposed to be utilized in an emergency, but that assumes that federal planners picked the right items (drugs, vaccines, equipment, etc.) to have in the stockpile. To what extent do you feel confident that the investment strategy for the SNS is the right one? Should we invest more in other aspects of preparedness, such as better vaccine development platforms or supply chains, rather than hard assets that may not be the right ones for an emergency?

Stockpiling is one tool in the preparedness arsenal. It is an important one: stockpiling provided the United States with a level of response capacity for a variety of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear threats it lacked before the development of the SNS. Some also believe that the presence of a national stockpile has a deterrent effect. While investing in the SNS will remain an important element of the U.S. strategy, stockpiling may make more sense for certain threats than for others. Known threats, threats for which threat-specific medical countermeasures (MCM) are currently available, and/or threats for which available MCM would take too much time to manufacture in an emergency might be most conducive to stockpiling (federally-managed or vendor-managed inventory). Alternatively, it is reasonable to consider non-stockpiling methods to address emerging or unpredictable threats. The need for stockpiling may shift as technology and public-private-partnerships for manufacturing, distribution, and dispensing advance. The Panel believes strongly in the need for investment in platform technologies for vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics that will enable rapid and flexible responses. What the precise balance should be among traditional stockpiles, surge-capable platforms, improved supply chains, and other delivery possibilities will depend on MCM requirements as determined by the Public Health Emergency Medical Countermeasures Enterprise (PHEMCE) and other federal inputs as deemed necessary by leadership. The interagency means to establish, assess, and revisit this balance should be addressed within the National Biodefense Strategy per Recommendation 3, and the development of a Medical Countermeasure Response Framework per Recommendation 22 of the bipartisan report of Blue Ribbon Study Panel for Biodefense, *A National Blueprint for Biodefense: Leadership and Major Reform Needed to Optimize Efforts*.

3. In broad terms, please compare the urgency of addressing the threat of biological weapons with other threats facing the nation today, such as violent extremism, dirty bombs, and natural disasters.

Simply put, the Nation does not afford the biological threat the same level of attention as it does other threats facing the Nation today (e.g. chemical threats, radiological dispersal devices, nuclear threats, improvised explosive devices, violent extremism). Unlike for these other threats, there is no centralized leader for biodefense. There is no comprehensive national strategic plan for biodefense. There is no all-inclusive dedicated budget for biodefense. The Nation lacks a single leader to control, prioritize, coordinate, and hold agencies accountable for working toward common national biodefense. This weakness precludes sufficient defense against biological threats and lends greater urgency to addressing the biological threat. Therefore, a leader must take charge of our Nation's response to biological crises, as well as day-to-day activities in the absence of such crises.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record
Submitted to Hon. Thomas Ridge and Hon. Joseph Lieberman
From Senator Tammy Baldwin

“Assessing the State of Our Nation’s Biodefense”

October 28, 2015

1. In your testimony, you highlighted the need to incentivize the pharmaceutical market to produce antidotes for deadly viruses and diseases, such as Ebola and Chikungunya, where there is currently little to no laissez-faire market for such products.
 - A. What is your recommendation on how to incentivize the pharmaceutical market?
 - i. Should the Federal government offer subsidies to research and development companies, as well as pharmaceutical companies that produce, or contribute to the production of, these types of antidotes?

The federal government is the primary and often only purchaser of civilian medical countermeasures, and must therefore provide funding and other incentives for their development. The transformative solutions that academia, biotechnology firms, and pharmaceutical companies can bring to bear need to be incentivized, whether through appropriations or other methods. The Panel believes that the 10-year advance appropriation provided through the BioShield Special Reserve Fund from 2004-2013 was the most significant market incentive of its time, and it should be renewed. This is the best way to incentivize the pharmaceutical market. Other kinds of incentives, many of which the Panel listed on page 55 of *A National Blueprint for Biodefense: Leadership and Major Reform Needed to Optimize Efforts*, hold promise for incentivizing the market in addition to the advance appropriation. The Panel is not positioned to decide which among these will be most important, and strongly recommends (as per Recommendation 28d of *A National Blueprint for Biodefense*) that the federal government convene as soon as possible with industry to determine the incentive or suite of incentives that will optimally enable the market.

2. In the Biodefense Report, you describe a plausible scenario in which terrorist factions infect animals in the United States with a genetically modified Nipah virus that has been modified to increase transferability between animals and humans. More generally, you express concern over transferrable zoonotic diseases resulting from human-animal interactions, especially in emerging countries.
 - A. What needs to be done to develop effective measures for animal health surveillance in the United States and in emerging countries to counter both terrorist threats and natural threats?

The United States is a global leader in zoonotic disease surveillance. Yet, even the United States' best efforts lag behind the threat. One of the best things all countries can do is approach disease detection from a One Health perspective. All countries must place high priority on information sharing across public health, animal health, and environmental health departments (or ministries). Only when they share resources and information across sectors can rapid detection – one of the most critical elements of preventing the spread of communicable disease – reliably occur. The United States has certainly made progress toward this end, but the inability of the National Biosurveillance Integration System to capture and fuse data across sectors is a significant impediment toward effective U.S. biosurveillance. Other countries face similar impediments. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is funding work in some developing countries to assist governments in developing One Health policy frameworks to enable more integrated approaches to zoonotic disease surveillance and detection. Congress and the Administration should continue to support such work. In addition, the Panel offers two means to improve and sustain detection capabilities for animal diseases in Recommendation 14 of *A National Blueprint for Biodefense*: (1) increase opportunities across departments for animal health data collection; and (2) annually fund the National Animal Health Laboratory Network to authorized levels. All of these measures can positively impact preparedness for any zoonotic pathogen, whether intentionally introduced, accidentally released, or naturally occurring.

3. Your report argues that a comprehensive stockpile of medical countermeasures is a deterrent to bioterrorism. If we know the threat is out there, a stockpile of vaccines and treatments is one of the best ways we can effectively take identified threats off the table. In your testimony, you state that currently there is not a stockpile of medical countermeasures for deadly viruses and diseases, such as Ebola and Chikungunya.
 - A. Do you believe that increased budgets to the Department of Health and Human Services would result in an increased production of these types of medical countermeasures?
 - B. Do you believe that a combination of Federal government subsidies to research and development companies and pharmaceutical companies that produce, or contribute to the production of, these types of antidotes, as well as increased budgets to the Department of Health and Human Services, is an appropriate method to produce medical countermeasures for deadly viruses/diseases and deter bioterrorism?

The Panel believes that funding for civilian medical countermeasures (MCM) should be consistent with authorized levels (where available) for research and development, procurement, and stockpiling. The funding piece that has become the most problematic has been for procurement. The Project BioShield Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-276) authorized a ten-year appropriation for MCM procurements of nearly \$5.6 billion for 2004-2013. Congress then appropriated funding through the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2004 (P.L. 108-90). These dollar figures were later reiterated by a Republican Congress (through bipartisan votes) in the Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Reauthorization Act (P.L. 113-5), which was signed into law by a Democratic President in 2013. The Director

of the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority has since stated that he can indeed use all of that funding toward countermeasure procurement. Given these facts, the breadth of biological threats that the nation faces, and that MCM can act both as a deterrent and a response, the Panel believes that funding should meet these agreed-upon levels. The same is true for advanced development and stockpiling. Other kinds of incentives (including those listed on page 55 of *A National Blueprint for Biodefense*), mutually agreed upon by industry and government, are also likely to produce more enthusiastic partnerships.

While funding is necessary, it is also insufficient. The Panel recommends elimination of bureaucratic procedures that unnecessarily impede contracting. The Panel also recommends a National Biodefense Strategy and unified budget as means to ensure that the Administration regularly considers strategic needs, technical requirements, and funding requirements. Over time, this strategic interagency approach combined with an evolving threat landscape may reveal shifting levels of fiscal need.

4. In your testimony, you express concern over the use of chemical weapons in the Middle East and the potential use of biological weapons in the near future given the proximity of our American troops and personnel.
 - A. As there are numerous viruses and diseases, and our troops are scattered throughout nearly every corner of the world, including the Middle East, do you recommend the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Health Affairs direct funding to multiple programs to promote overseas health intelligence gathering and analysis in order to protect our U.S. Government troops and personnel from health threats?

Various parts of the federal government are responsible for different activities that comprise biodefense, as well as for different populations that could be affected by biological threats. Only the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) is responsible for protection of the health of our military personnel and those civilians who provide DOD support throughout the world. The Panel recognizes the efforts of the DOD National Center for Medical Intelligence, as well as those medical intelligence activities undertaken by the different branches of military service. However, the Panel is also aware of the limitations of those efforts and the lack of connection between medical intelligence (undertaken by medical service entities) and military intelligence (undertaken by military intelligence entities). The Panel recommends that DOD: (1) continue to support ongoing medical intelligence efforts; (2) increase funding for military intelligence activities regarding chemical and biological warfare and terrorism directed against U.S. military activities overseas; and (3) require medical and military intelligence personnel to work with each other – perhaps with joint assignments – to gather, analyze, and disseminate medical intelligence.

Other U.S. government employees and contractors operate throughout the world, in addition to DOD personnel. They do not benefit from even the limited advantages associated with current DOD medical intelligence activities. The Panel recommends that all federal departments and

agencies, including but not limited to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), conduct medical intelligence activities to help protect their employees overseas. They could do so jointly with DOD via the National Center for Medical Intelligence, although the Panel is aware that previous attempts to do so did not result in sufficient benefit to ensure the continued participation of non-DOD agencies. The Panel also recommends full execution of Recommendation 26 (to implement military-civilian collaboration for biodefense) in its bipartisan report, *A National Blueprint for Biodefense: Leadership and Major Reform Needed to Optimize Efforts*.

Specifically regarding DHS, the Panel does not recommend that the DHS Office of Health Affairs direct funding to multiple programs to promote medical intelligence and gathering for DHS personnel working overseas. Instead, the Panel recommends that the DHS Office of Health Affairs and the DHS Office of Intelligence and Analysis work with each other and their appropriate counterparts in the DOD, Department of Justice, Department of State, other Departments and agencies (including those in the Intelligence Community) with which DHS personnel are co-located to obtain needed medical intelligence and use it to inform ongoing health protection efforts in this regard.

